

ARE WE MUSLIMS



Shaikh Muhammad Qutb

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Muhammad Qutb

**Translated by:
Dr. Chafik Abdelghani**

**Al-Firdous Publishers,
London**

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

©Copyright: Al-Firdous Ltd.

All rights reserved 2013. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means: electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the written permission of the publishers and copyright owner.

First Edition: 2013.

Cover design & Typeset by:

Chetan Boda

ISBN: 1 874263 35 3

Published and Distributed by:

Al-Firdous Ltd.

PO Box 71305

London

SE17 9DE

www.al-firdous.co.uk

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	4
Introduction	7
The Concept of Islam	11
Models from the Muslim Society	55
Crossing the Redline	91
Internal Factors	101
Universal Trends	157
The Future is For Islam	177

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Acknowledgements

To my father, who instilled in me the passion for knowledge-seeking. May Allah ﷻ accompany his solitude and alleviate his torment in the grave;

To my mother for her sacrifice. May Allah ﷻ make her walk;

To my wife Maria Erroujdani for typing the Qur'anic verses and for her endless support throughout the production of this work. May Allah ﷻ grant her pious children;

To my beautiful daughter Wisal (Casawiyya) and to my twin handsome sons, Yasser and Youssef; I love you and I miss you so much.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

In the Name of Allah, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

□ It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards east or west, but it is righteousness to believe in Allah and the Last Day, and the angels, and the Book, and the Messengers; to spend of your substance, out of love for him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfill the contracts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah-fearing. □ (*Al-Baqara:177*)

“Faith (*al-Iman*) is not by embellishment or wishful thinking, but it is what settles in the heart and is verified through your actions.” (The Prophet □)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Introduction

Why has Islam, once *the* excellent model of human life, degenerated into sheer mechanical gestures that are sometimes performed through simple ‘intention’ (*an-niyya*) or not performed at all? It is pathetic to hear or see that despite such relapse, we still proudly boast our identity as being *true* Muslims.

Why has Islam, once *the* fairest constitution on the face of the earth that governed the economic, social, political, spiritual, ideological, emotional and behavioural life of the Muslim man, been reduced to a mere host of *emotions* that are divorced from reality? A Muslim person may *-if ever-* be impregnated with these emotions whilst living in the so-called Muslim society, yet he is neither moved by the evil acts he witnesses nor feels the urge to stop them. A Muslim person may *-if ever-* be infused with these emotions, yet he ironically does not behave like a Muslim both in his private and public life. For instance, his customs, opinion, purpose and everyday conduct have nothing to do with Islam whether at the level of the relationship between two individuals, the relationship between the individual and the group, the relationship between the individual and the state or the relationship between the ruler and the ruled.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Why has Islam, once a comprehensive system of life and the embodiment of Law and order, lagged way behind into a state of total disarray?

How have these bizarre ideas which divide Islam into emotions and practical conduct emerged? How do these bizarre ideas conceive of emotions as being isolated from conduct?

How did it occur to Muslims to *import* their economic system, the foundations of their society and their traditions from non-Muslim societies, and still claim they are Muslims?

How did it occur to a Muslim person to violate Allah's □ Laws in everything and abuse the trust (*al-amana*) by cheating, lying, deceiving and allowing himself to be humiliated? How did it occur to a Muslim person to rid himself of his duty to establish a Muslim society whether through his own actions or through inviting society to do so, and participate, instead, in establishing a non-Muslim society based on injustice, deviance and sin? How does he after all these actions think that few prostrations (*raka'at*) during the day, be they sincere or insincere, will exempt him from his duties toward Allah □ and earn him a place amongst the Muslims?

How can a woman claim she is a true Muslim person whilst she lies, cheats, backbites, begrudges and goes out in public places with her head, legs and arms uncovered? How did it occur to her to rid herself of her duty as an educator, mother and housewife, and participate, instead, in establishing a

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

non-Muslim society based on injustice, deviance and sin? How does she after all these actions think that her *good intention* will suffice to earn her a place amongst the Muslims?

At present, there are some absurd ideas which tend to consider religion, society, economy, the relationship between the individual and society, traditions, code of conduct, dress code, art, and media as separate entities, and many of us tend to beg the question: where do these ideas come from?

It goes without saying that there are several factors behind this deterioration of Islam in the hearts of Muslims. And we may ask ourselves the following question: Was this the case in olden times? This was not at all the case in olden times when the teachings of Islam were fully implemented, nor was it the case even in recent times when the Islamic world was plunged into rampant corruption for two centuries, precisely before the French Expedition.

Historically, the first symptoms of division between the principles of Islam and actual behaviour first appeared during the Umayyad rule. This division; however, never violated the fundamentals of Islam. It is the capital-based government body which was *partially* corrupt in policy-making and managing the treasury. People elsewhere remained to a large extent adherent to and compliant with the *Shari'a* which governed all aspects of their everyday life. More to the point, the system of society was initially based on Islamic principles and derived all its laws *uniquely* from the *Shari'a*. This division, though *extensively* widened during the rule of the Turks, a number

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

of societal matters, values, visions, thoughts, behaviours remained purely Islamic until the landing of the Crusades in the Islamic world during the 18th, 19th centuries and the beginning of the 20th century. It was during this period when the Muslim society underwent an enormous change and an enormous breakup.

The present work is an attempt to come to grips with the factors behind the degeneration of Islam, once a model system of life, into a host of sheer acts of worship performed here and there, sincerely or insincerely. Once we lay our hands on the origin of this decline, we may tear it out by the root, may turn away from the forces of evil, may return to Allah ﷻ and thus become true Muslims.

Muhammad Qutb

The Concept of Islam

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

How did Muslim predecessors understand the meaning of Islam, and how should we follow in their footsteps?

There is no doubt that Muslim predecessors did not understand Islam in the way we want to understand it now. For us, Islam consists of simple acts of worship or gestures isolated from the actual behaviour. Man can display sincerity during the performance of these acts and has the right to seek other than Allah's assistance in other matters. In contrast Islam, as understood by the Prophet and subsequently by his companions and followers, is utter submissiveness of the soul to Allah. This implies that man's existence, his thoughts, emotions, and actual behaviour should be compliant with the provisions of the constitution laid out by Allah.

Whilst Muslims today perfectly understand the literal meaning of the phrase *Laa Ilaha Illa Allah wa anna Muhammad Rasulu Allah* (there is no god but Allah Alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger), they failed to recognize its significance and weight in the soul and in real life.

In contrast, the phrase *Laa Ilaha Illa Allah wa anna Muhammad Rasulu Allah* (there is no god but Allah Alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger) meant a lot for early Muslims. It means:

- Allah is the Cherisher and Sustainer of this universe;
- Allah is the Only One worthy of worship;

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

- Allah ﷻ is the One who gives life to His Creatures and the One who takes it away;
- Allah ﷻ is the Provider.

The slightest doubt that there is someone or a force other than Allah ﷻ which can benefit or harm people is a type of polytheism (*shirk*).

For them, the phrase *Laa Ilaha Illa Allah wa anna Muhammad Rasulu Allah* (there is no god but Allah Alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger) also means:

- Allah ﷻ is the Ruler;
- Allah ﷻ has the power to enact laws that regulate people's lives in all aspects, and there is no one or any other force that has the power to do so;
- These laws have existed since the beginning of humanity, for Allah ﷻ revealed the corresponding verse when He ﷻ commanded Adam ﷥ to descend from the Heavens:

ﷻ We said: 'Get you down all from here; there will either come to you guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall They grieve. But those who reject Faith and belie Our Signs, they shall be companions of the fire; they shall abide therein. ﷻ (*Al Baqara:37-38*) So,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

this has been binding on people since their creation, otherwise, they are non-Muslims.

For them, the phrase *Laa Ilaha Illa Allah wa anna Muhammad Rasulu Allah* (there is no god but Allah Alone and that Muhammad is His Messenger) also means:

- The Prophet ﷺ is the Messenger *officially* appointed to carry out the mission of conveying the message;
- The Prophet ﷺ must be obeyed as laid down by the Qur'an:

ﷻ We sent not ever any Messenger, but that he should be obeyed. ﷻ

(An-Nisa:64)

ﷻ Take what the Messenger assigns to you, and deny yourselves that which he withholds from you. ﷻ (Al-Hashr:7)

- The Prophet ﷺ is the implementation model of Allah's ﷻ Shari'a, and must thus be adopted as the role model for every man be him leader, teacher or otherwise.

Such was the general concept of the phrase *Laa Ilaha Illa Allah wa anna Muhammad Rasulu Allah* (there is no god but Allah Alone and that

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Muhammad is His Messenger), the concept which, as soon as it lands inside man's heart, counts him as a Muslim person, because it is a concept that represents the reality of Islam and steers man towards the Right Path (*the path to Allah* □).

Along the way, this general concept generated, following the detailed directives of the Qur'an and the actual behaviour of the Prophet □, other sub-concepts which had a profound impact on Muslim predecessors which manifested itself in their emotions, thoughts and reactions. Despite all this, they never dared '*philosophize*' these concepts or made them the subject matter of their scholarly research

Muslim predecessors spontaneously realised that 'action speaks louder than intention'. Intention (*an-niyya*) alone is not a sufficient qualification for Islam, so long as such intention does not materialize itself in real life. Put differently, such *intention* is worthless when weighed up against the requirements of reality and the Commands of Allah □. Hence, This is further the Prophet's □ tradition which goes "Faith (*al-Iman*) is not by embellishment or wishful thinking, but it is what settles in the heart and is verified through your actions." (Reported on the authority of Anas □)

For the sake of argument, man may sometimes be fooled by his unshakeable conviction about a certain matter to the point of blindness to reality. Such fervent conviction is dangerously deceptive, for it constitutes only a tiny asset which will hardly push the course of life forward. Don't you sometimes

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

imagine yourself you can change the world in one go; whereas, you cannot even shake the coffee table before you? Practically in order to shake or move the table, you need to increase your pushing force or develop the realistic asset of your intrinsic desire so that it equals resistance first, and then starts increasing afterwards. The more your pushing force grows, the more it is realized in real life, and movement (shaking/moving of the table) becomes the real measurement of your asset.

This reality is not confined to the world of man only, but extends to the realities of the universe in general, and is part of existence. In fact, every inventor realizes that the internal force of say a device is not enough as a force in its own right because he is convinced that such internal force should translate into external force; that is to say, change from intention to action. It is only then that such device possesses an amount that is enough for resistance, but also for increase so that it eventually produces the required movement in real life. Action – the law of existence – is based on this reality: changing internal force into external one and increasing such force so that it overcomes resistance and moves into the required direction.

By the same token, the human soul –a *universal force* – follows exactly the same law. There is no difference in the great forces of the universe between material and ideal things. In modern science, material things and force are the two sides of the same coin, which implies that intention alone is not enough; it is a mere intrinsic force that has not put itself to the test yet. In

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

other words, only hard knocks and actual experience (*action*) will reveal the true reality of such intrinsic force (*an-niyya*).

Now, let us look at the 'natural' hurdles that stand in the way of man's life and which intention alone cannot surmount. Inwardly, these obstacles consist of the following: intimacy, traditions, imitation, yearning to an easy life, indolence and averting hard work and risks. These may be summed up in one phrase: *the pursuit of pleasure*. Outwardly, the barriers consist of the social unjust conventions and deviant forces which may exist in society and control it. These barriers may be summed up in one word: *at-Taghut*; that is, any force that trespasses the limit. Hence, the inward and outward barriers are both the resistance which must be overcome so that intention turns into a real force that equals such resistance, and then surpasses it in order to produce the required movement that is compatible with the universe and Allah's Will. Inward factor and outward factor are real active forces with pressure, weight and forward push. Therefore, intention alone is incapable of resisting such forces. This is one of the self-evident realities of life which the Prophet ﷺ long realized and drew the following conclusion: "Faith (*al-Iman*) is not by embellishment or wishful thinking, but it is what settles in the heart and is verified through your actions." Such reality was subsequently grasped and capitalized upon by his companions and followers who sacrificed self to create a society based on Islamic foundations.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

What is the worth of good intention in real life, or what is its defect? Good intention is both imaginary and deceptive because it makes man believe that he can change the universe at the push of a button; whereas in reality, he does not even realise how much effort is needed to push the coffee table. It is true a man is convinced that he is good-hearted, upright, good-mannered and in touch with Allah ﷻ, yet this fine character is only valid when he abstains from running after life's splendours and takes risks to pull the rope leading down the society in which he lives into the dark abyss.

In fact, no single act has any value without this good intention, and this good intention is likewise worthless if it does not translate itself into an extrinsic force in real life. With the foregoing in mind, was the Prophet ﷺ so rigid in his outlook when he set the criteria for real faith, insisting that: "Faith (*al-Iman*) is not by embellishment or wishful thinking, but it is what settles in the heart and is verified through your actions" or was he over-realistic? The Prophet ﷺ was neither rigid nor over-realistic, but it is Islam which unwaveringly focuses on striking a balance between the two. *An-niyya* alone is incomplete unless it is coupled with fruitful work in real life. Hence, the Qur'an never says the following in isolation, but couples it with action:

ﷻ Those who have faith... ﷻ, but says:

ﷻ Those who have faith and work righteousness. ﷻ; that is to say, what settles in the heart and is verified through actions. This why Islam is known as a religion of natural disposition (*al-Fitra*) because it complies with

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

man's natural disposition in the universe and existence. The early Muslims took this concept of Islam as a self-evident reality and were never satisfied with just having a good intention inwardly, relying on the phrase 'The Lord of hearts', while outwardly, their practical conduct violates the principles of Islam. They realized that intention and action are the two sides of the same coin. Put another way, they realized that Islam is implementation in real life. This implies that each individual conduct must be in tune with Islamic teachings whatever that may entail, and that society which consists of individuals must, too, be in tune with Islamic teachings whatever that may entail.

It is worth mentioning in this context that the soul cannot remain steadfast in its mission. There will of course be some obstacles during its journey, but this is only normal because man is inherently weak:

□ And man was created weak. □ (An-Nisa:28)

Because Allah □ knows this weakness, He forgives His Servants and accepts their repentance and expiation so long as they do not persist in committing sins.

□ And Allah □ loves those who do good, and those who, having done something to be ashamed of, or wronged their own souls, earnestly bring Allah to mind, and ask for forgiveness for their sins, and who can forgive sins

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

except Allah, and are never obstinate in persisting knowingly in (the wrong) they have done. □ (Al-Imran:134-135)

There is a difference between the deeply-ingrained reality in humanity and between the belief that the good intention alone is sufficient for life and for Islam. Bear in mind that Allah □ accepts repentance from His Servants and has made it incumbent upon Himself that He will be Merciful toward those who strive to convert their good intention (*an-Niyya at-Tayyiba*) into a beneficial act, toward those who err, but soon realize their mistake and hasten to seek Allah's □ Forgiveness. In return, Allah □ accepts their repentance:

□ Unless he repents, believes, and works righteous deeds, for Allah will change the evil of such persons into good, and Allah is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful. □ (Al-Furqan:70)

Early Muslims never conceived of being Muslims simply by possessing this *good intention*. In fact, they did not see themselves as Muslims unless they pulled the rope leading the Muslim society into the dark abyss. Islam, to them, was both an inward and outward action, and this is how they were educated by the Prophet □. Once this reality was rooted inside them, they set out on their quest to 'save the deviant society they were living in. Were they successful in their mission? Yes, they were because of their strong determination

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Another self-evident reality which they realized was that the Muslim society should be based on *Shari'a*. To them, a society will never attain the status of being Islamic unless it implements *Shari'a*. Hence, it was on this self-evident reality that the early Muslim society remained Islamic for a very long time, and it was this *special characteristic* which distinguished it from other societies.

This *distinctive feature* or prestige which Islam cherished during its history constituted an inviting target for orientalist (al-Mustashriqun) to launch their 'destructive' agenda. Their goal was simple: to demolish this magnificent edifice by separating society from *Shari'a*.

In his *Modern Trends in Islam*, Sir H.A.R. Gibb said: "The type of society a group creates for itself is based on its beliefs about the essence and goals of this universe, and the place of the human soul therein. Whereas this principle remains a purely theoretical issue echoed by the Church, Islam is *the* only religion which is believed to have built society on this principle, and *Shari'a* was the principal instrument to achieve such goal."

Von Grunebaum stated in his *Islam*: "What took the early Christians to know in decades was realized by Muhammad □ few years before: Since God's Will stipulates that this life is perishable, His Group (the Muslim Group/*al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*) should settle down and live harmoniously with the teachings of Divine Inspiration. Hence, the mission of the Muslim Group is to create a comprehensive pattern of life under the Divine Inspiration, and this pattern

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

should include all aspects of human existence, from birth to death. In addition, this pattern should denounce any division between what is sacred and what is worldly in life. In fact, it makes every single minute of time linked to each other via religion and dependent on rituals to complement it in carrying out any duty. It was in this exemplary behavior they were united to a certain extent. However life, in its minute details, has been assigned a higher image derived from its religious significance. The individual's life alone was not the one required to transform into a group of coherent acts imposed by God. Rather, it was the Muslim society which was required to transform, and it managed to do so. For instance the state, army and treasury became in the language of early Muslims, the state of God, the army of God and the treasury of God."

Wilferd Cantwell Smith states in the introduction of his *Islam in Modern History*: "If the first distinctive feature of the Islamic world is 'Islamic', then the purpose of our research is to investigate the meaning of this reality." He says in the chapter entitled *Islam and History*, pp.26-27: "Researchers in issues on Islam have noted the emergence of the concept of state of society in Islam.. It is clear that the Muslim society is well-cemented and that its members' loyalty and bond are very strong. Many have realized that the Muslim group (*al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*) is not a sheer social group. Rather, it is a religious group, and religion and state are one entity if we use our inappropriate Western label. Unlike other societies, the Muslim society is not tied up by loyalties and rituals only nor is it the product of a high example. On

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

the contrary, it is a lively society born out of a profound personal conviction, a religious conviction with its significance inside its every member. We may say that this society –*this group*– is the highest religious embodiment, with the word ‘religious’ implying individual as explained above. If a creed or a theological system (founded on religious basis) happens to be an expression of the intellectual image of the personal belief –as it is usually the case, especially in Christianity, then the social system is –*with all its diverse activities*– the *practical* manifestation of the personal belief of the Muslim person.”

On the whole, all Orientalists are of the opinion that Muslim society originates from and is based on *al-Aqeeda al-Islamiyya* (Islamic creed). This means that society cannot be separated from *al-Aqeeda* and this *Aqeeda* manifests itself in the practical conduct that is derived from a comprehensive law which includes every aspect of life.

This was one of the self-evident realities among early Muslims. Put differently, there is no Islam without a strong Muslim society, and there is no Islam without realistic efforts put in by every individual to build a society on the principles of *Shari’a*.

Part of this self-evident reality is the strong conviction that *Shari’a* is a comprehensive and efficient system that covers every human activity on earth. Early Muslims never understood the Islamic law should be limited to acts of worship only or to personal matters such as marriage, divorce,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

manumission, inheritance and so on and so forth. Rather, they were aware that it should include *all* human activities so long as the society is Muslim – *that is, based on Islamic pillars*- and so long as such society is *the* place for the manifestation and materialisation of the Islamic precepts in real life

Any deal, operation or transaction, whether in mundane or weighty matters, between individuals or between individuals and society should be regulated by Islamic law. The scope of *Shari'a* is even wider since it regulates man's relationship not only with his neighbours and with the state, which is the limit of most other legal systems, but also with his God and his own conscience. Rituals such as the daily prayers, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage, are an integral part of *Shari'a* law. The *Shari'a* is also concerned as much with ethical standards as with legal rules, indicating not only what man is entitled or bound to do in law, but also what he ought, in conscience, to do or refrain from doing.

The system of government is determined by the Qur'an, the *Sunna* and the Muslim group (*al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya*). For instance, the principles of consultation (*Shura*), obedience to Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ, and obedience to superiors as derived from obedience to Allah ﷻ and the Prophet ﷺ was clearly voiced by Abu Bakr ﷺ: "Obey me so long as I obey Allah ﷻ, but if I disobey Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, then do not obey me." This statement is derived from the Prophet's ﷺ tradition: "There is no obedience to anyone in disobedience to Allah ﷻ."^[1]

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Islamic criminal law consists in specific laws that are incumbent upon the Muslim group. Such laws; for instance, include punishment for murder, adultery, theft, drinking alcohol, apostasy (*ar-ridda*), corruption in the land and other forbidden acts, drawing upon theoretical and practical interpretations contained in the *Sunna*. Yet, the perpetrator may still be pardoned and be reintegrated as an active member in the Muslim society as soon as he declares his/her repentance and abstinence from crimes..."[2]

With the foregoing in mind, early Muslims were strongly convinced that the Divine law, *Shari'a*, is not merely a system of law, but a comprehensive code of behaviour that embraces both private and public activities. Such was one of the self-evident realities of true Faith (*Iman*); otherwise, what is the intent behind Faith if it does not mean executing Allah's □ Commands as laid out in His Book (The Quran).

True Faith in Allah □ occurs when a Muslim person believes in what Allah □ says in the Qur'an and rejects any other man-made laws which have left a lot to be desired. There is no true Faith if a Muslim has a shred of doubt about the validity of the Divine law; for example, wondering that such law may have been created once *designedly* for a handful of Arabs who lived in the Arab Peninsula for a short period of their life, precisely during the lifetime of the Prophet □. Thoughts or claims of this kind are refuted in the Qur'an which clearly states that Islam is for all people:

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

□ Verily this is no less than a Message to (all) the Worlds. □ (*At-Takwir:27*)
and that the Qur'an with all its laws and commands is the truth:
□ We sent down the (Qur'an) in truth, and in truth has it descended □ (*Al-Israa:105*)

And bear in mind that such truth is linked to the actual existence:

□ Allah created the heavens and the earth for just ends, and in order that each soul may find the recompense of what it has earned and none of them be wronged. □ (*Al-Jathiyya:22*)

Hence, the purpose –*recompense every soul of what it has earned*– for which this law has been created is the same for which heavens and earth have been created. So, it is not designed for that handful of Arabs in the Peninsula, nor is it confined to the era of the Prophet's □ lifetime. Furthermore, Allah □ explicitly says to all mankind at the end of the last revealed verse of the Qur'an:

□ Today, I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed My blessing upon you, and I have approved Islam for your religion. □ (*Al-Maida:3*)

Questioning and casting any shadow of doubt on the validity of Allah's □ *Shari'a (Divine Law)* violates the reality of Faith in Allah □, and this is

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

something a true Muslim will never conceive of. Fourteen centuries have gone by since the revelation of the Divine law and, throughout all this period, humanity has gone through a great deal of experience, people have articulated a number of philosophies, put forward theories and done research in politics and other fields, yet the conclusion reached in all this science is: the result of any man-made law is the voice and expression of the governing or ruling class, and it represents and defends its interests at the expense of the other social classes. History tells us that once a system seizes power, it only defends its disciples. To illustrate, Feudalism enacts laws that protect its followers at the expense of the rest of people. Capitalism enacts laws that protect capitalists at the expense of the workers. The Proletariat, in turn, enacts laws that defend and protect the interests of the workers, and so on and so forth. Hence, this justifies what Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an that any law other than Allah's ﷻ seeks desire and tends to suit the whims of its makers and followers.

Fourteen centuries have gone by since the revelation of the Shari'ah (Divine Law) and, throughout all this period, humanity has gone through a great deal of experience which confirms that deviating from the *Shari'a* has had far-reaching consequences. It has caused people an immense amount of unbearable suffering. It undermined their security threatened their comfort, divided them into sects, and ignited a bloody war between them. Add to that the 'global' misery which produced two successive great wars in quarter

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

of a century. Moreover, such deviation has deteriorated the family edifice, rejected moral values, and tore man apart from his essence. This is evidenced by the rampant epidemics of madness, psychological troubles, high blood pressure, heart attacks, cancer, and unprecedented suicide incidents.

Early Muslims, though no philosophers as we are now, realised that there are two elements in human nature: one is constant and the other is variable, though both are totally linked in man, life and universe. They also realised that Allah's permanent law throughout human existence covers both elements and cement them with religion and *Aqeeda*.

There is a constant element in man derived from permanent truths which do not change whatever the circumstances. This element has been determined by the Will of Allah:

□ Your Lord said to the angels: "I will create a vicegerent on earth" □ (Al-Baqara:30)

People have all been created from a single soul:

□ O people, fear your Lord Who has created you from a single soul. □ (An-nisa:1)

And from this soul(i.e from its kind), He □ created 'the mate' which fits it:

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

□ ...and created its mate □ (*An-Nisa:1*)

□ And among His Signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them, and He has put love and mercy between your (hearts). □ (*Ar-Rum:21*)

Then, from this soul and its mate, Allah □ created all creatures and all peoples:

□ ..and from the pair of them scattered abroad many men and women. . □ (*An-Nisa:1*)

□ O Mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise (each other). Verily the Most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (He who is) the Most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (With all things). □ (*Al-Hujurat:13*)

These permanent and established truths gave birth to other truths which are, likewise, constant and permanent. For example, creatures feel the Grandeur of Allah □ compared to their weakness, and seek His Assistance in life. Spouses, who have been created from a single soul, feel a deep intimacy towards each other, and their existence is not complete without such intimacy, love and mercy. People, too, especially when they hold no

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

grudges against each other, feel a strong brotherhood fostered by the fact that their origin is one, *the single soul*. Hence, they would help each other and participate together in seeking goodness. These are permanent and constant elements because they are built on permanent truths.

The other element is variable. It means that there exist in man some elements which are renewable on a daily basis as a result of human development, and the continuous interaction between the mind and the universe. For instance, man is in a continuous quest to know and discover the treasures of the universe and exploit them for his own benefits. New circumstances are thus created, and people progress from a primitive to a civilized life, from a rural to an urban life, and from reliance on agriculture to a reliance on industry.

And given that Islam is a religion of *fitra* (predisposition), it (Islam) goes in tune with the two sides of such predisposition. It furnishes one side with constant laws, and the other with constant truths, giving it the freedom of progress and development within the frame of those constant truths and in compliance with the predisposition of the universe and the predisposition of life. Simply put, it gives one side *Aqeeda*, and this *Aqeeda* does not change because it is constant. Besides this *Aqeeda*, it gives it marriage and divorce codes, and other civil and international laws.

Marriage and divorce, or the relationship between a man and woman, are fixed and have a fixed code because they are based on a constant reality: the

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

man, on one hand, and the woman, on the other, and the strong relationship which draws one close to the other. Circumstances always change. For example, society, the economic, educational, and political systems do change, but such change never affects or changes the established truth or *fitra* that a man is a man, a woman is a woman, and neither of them can do without the other.[3]

Punishment for a crime is also constant because it is based on something constant: the relationship between a man and his fellowman –or between man and society- and the sanctity of every human being must not be violated by others. And life circumstances change. For example, work, production, man's relationship with the machine, and political systems change. This change; however, does not alter the established truth which governs the facts of human history: all people are created from a single soul, and kinship links them all [4]

Similarly, some civil laws are fixed such as selling, hiring, mortgage, loan, agency, etc...

As for the variable aspect of human life, which is linked to the constant aspect, it consists in governing policies, the treasury, the 'form' of society or the form of life from primitive to agricultural commercial, and to industrial.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

These transitions develop with the development of the human mind and its interaction with the universe. However, this development does not *-in fact-* cannot steer away from the constant aspect, because both aspects are an integral part in man.

In all these matters, Islam was so wise in keeping with the *fitra* and responding to its needs. It has thus drawn a general outline without going into details. Simply put, it set up a 'frame' which it wants for humanity, but left it to every generation to fill it with the picture according to its (generation) mood, financial situation, degree of knowledge and production. And such picture must fit in the frame.

To illustrate this, with regards to the governing policies, it laid down two principles: **justice** and **consultation**. As for the former, Allah ﷻ says:

ﷻ ...and when you judge between people, judge with justice ﷻ (*An-Nisa:58*)

As for the latter, Allah ﷻ says:

ﷻ ...who (conduct) their affairs by mutual Consultation. ﷻ (*Ash-Shura:38*)

A close examination tells you that Islam does not determine the road map for such consultation, say, is it one council, two councils? Should the council be automatically formed by appointment or vote? Should representation be

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

individual or corporate, etc...? Rather, it places such decisions with what human experience has to offer.

As for money policy, it put forward a number of principles which all have in common: the need for people to share in the common good and no one should be deprived. According to the Qur'an, wealth belongs to Allah ﷻ, and He ﷻ gives it to the group:

ﷻ And spend (in charity) out of the (substance) whereof He has made you heirs. For those of you who believe and spend (in charity), for them is a great reward. ﷻ (*Al-Hadid:7*)

ﷻ And give them of the wealth of Allah which He has given you. ﷻ (*An-Nur:33*)

Moreover, Islamic law stipulates that the group is the first beneficiary in this wealth and that whoever does a job sincerely, will be requited accordingly. However if one does not, then such remuneration should go back to the group:

ﷻ But do not give to fools their property. ﷻ (*An-Nisa:5*)

Islam disapproves of wealth being confined in the hands of a small minority whilst the rest of people live in deprived conditions:

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

□ ...in order that it may not (merely) make a circuit between the wealthy among you. □ (*Al-Hashr*:7)

In fact, it (Islam) imposes, according to the Qur'an, *Zakat* as a means to help the poor:

□ Alms are for the needy, for the unemployed, and for those who administer the collection and distribution of alms. □ (*At-Tawba*:60)

According to the Prophet □, "Muslims are to share in these three things: water, pasture and fire." (*Al-Bukhari*)

"You are better off offering your land to your brother than expecting payment in return." (*Al-Bukhari*)

Omar Ibn Al-Khattab □ said: "There is not a city that we Muslims have conquered but that I divided its plunder amongst its citizens just as the Prophet □ did with Khaybar" (*Al-Bukhari*)

However, Islam does not decide 'the breakdown' of people's share in the wealth Allah □ bestows upon the group (*al-Jama'a*) For instance, it does not specify whether it should be through nationalization, through allowing employees to have shares in the capital, or through paying them salaries which cover their basic needs, though remuneration is explicitly expressed by the Prophet □ in the following tradition: "Whosoever does a job, but does not

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

have a house should have a house. If he does not have a wife, then he should marry one. If he does not have a servant, then he should hire one. If he does not have a means of transport, then he should get one.” (*Ahmad and Abu Daud*)

Islam delegates the task of figuring out the ideal system to succeeding generations. Moreover, it does not lay out rigid rules for wealth and government policies so that they do not conflict with the continuous development of the group. Yet, it limits such ‘freedom of management’ by not separating any potential system from the constant and fixed principles nor does it give people the opportunity to manage them without evidence on the grounds that they ‘know how to handle their mundane matters’.

By contrast in Europe in particular and outside the Islamic frame in general, the ‘unlimited freedom of management’ has produced undesirable results. Feudalism and Capitalism in Europe and elsewhere have been the embodiment of unjust systems. Both of them are unlawful according to Islam. Both systems place wealth, whether in the form of land or capital, in the hands of the rich only and deprive others of it. At the other extreme, Communism calls for absolute obedience to the State and dictatorship over individuals.

“Islam—Allah’s □ Message to mankind— does not thrust people in this *blind development*. In fact, it provides them with guidance so that they do not go

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

astray and so that they safeguard their permanent existentialist freedom in all situations and circumstances.”[5]

Early Muslims were aware of all this. And though they did not *philosophize* it as we did, their overall understanding of fixed issues was the elucidation of texts without distorting the fundamentals. As for their understanding of the variable issues without, of course, distorting the fundamentals, it is best expressed in Omar Ibn Abdul aziz’s □ statement: “It is permissible for people to enact laws as they deem fit for their circumstances.”

Early Muslims knew from the concept of Islam that heavens and earth are one entity. The Prophet □ said: “If the Hour comes and one of you has a baby palm (*fasila*) in his hand, and he can still plant it before he stands up, let him plant it.” (Imam Ahmad, *al-Musnad*:3/183) The first thing that springs to mind is that the road to the Hereafter is the same as that to the worldly life. In fact, they are not different roads: one goes to the worldly life, and the other to the Hereafter. Rather, it is one road that contains and links both. Simply put, there is not a road to the Hereafter known as *worship*, and a road to the worldly life known as *work*. On the contrary, it is just one way which begins with the worldly life and finishes with the Hereafter. It is a way where work is not separated from worship, and worship from work. Both are one entity and go side by side on this *one way*.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Islam stresses that a Muslim keeps working until his last gasps of breath. If the Hour comes and one of you has a baby palm (*fasila*) in his hand, and he can still plant it before he stands up, let him plant it. This example reinforces the value of work. However, what is worth noting here is not just the emphasis on work but also on the road to the Hereafter.

Apparently, man draws a line between the two ways. He believes that preparing for the Hereafter entails divorce of the worldly life, and that working for the worldly life idles away the time devoted to the Hereafter.

This division between the worldly life and the Hereafter was deeply-ingrained in man, and such division goes beyond that and encompasses other human existence-related concepts. This life and the Hereafter are two separate entities and so are the body and soul, what is material and immaterial, physics and metaphysics, practical life and ideal life/values. All these concepts emanate from one point of time: the period between life and death or heavens and earth.

Human existence by means of *fitra* is one entity that consists in body, mind and soul. It encompasses what is material and immaterial, physical and spiritual desires, and contemplations of the mind. There is no doubt that the details of this existence are contradictory and that each one of them has a different destination. This means that if left to its own devices, each entity will be vulnerable to its whims. However the most amazing thing in

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

fitra; that is, the predisposition with which Allah ﷻ has created man, is that any potential disarray, disharmony and chaos may be controlled and thus harmonised and turned into a coherent whole that defies any power in the world.

The only way to achieve such harmony and coherence is to first unify this life and the Hereafter in one way. It is only then that life won't undergo divisions between work and worship, body and soul, theory and practice, reality and idealism. Once the two roads (the road of this life and that of the Hereafter) converge, harmoniously between all these entities is achieved. Islam can *easily* attain this goal. How does that happen? Islam unifies and sums up this unity between this life and the Hereafter in the following phrase:

ﷻ But seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on you, the home of the Hereafter, nor forget your portion in this world. ﷻ (*Al-Qasas:77*)

ﷻ Say, 'who has forbidden the ornament of Allah which He brought forth for His servants, and the good things of His providing? Say, 'these, on the Day of Resurrection, shall be exclusively for those who believed in this present life. ﷻ (*Al-A'raf:32*)

And the Prophet ﷺ was a concrete manifestation of this unity: for him, this life and the Hereafter were one entity [\[6\]](#)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Early Muslims realized also that worship in its strict Islamic sense is a comprehensive concept that encompasses all life's activities, be they private or public. One of the supreme characteristics of Islam is worship. This worship; however, is not confined to praying, giving alms and fasting only. It is deeper than that: it is the permanent relationship with Allah ﷻ. This *real* relationship is actually the entire system of education. Praying, fasting, giving alms, performing pilgrimage and other rituals are just the key to worship or 'service stations' where travelers stop for a refill. However, the entire road is worship, and any other rituals, acts, thoughts or feelings are also worship so long as the destination is one: Allah ﷻ.

More to the point, worship is not limited to those brief moments devoted to specific religious acts nor is it the purport of the verse:

ﷻ I have only created Jinn and men to serve Me. ﷻ (*Ad-Daariyyat:56*)

Otherwise, what will be the value of such brief moments that easily disperse in thin air? The value of such acts of worship lies in the fact that they act as a system of life: behavior, thought, feeling or a list of 'do's and don'ts'. And all matters are referred to Allah ﷻ and to his Constitution (the Qur'an) which one should consult with his heart, mind and conduct in real life. This is the *true* meaning of worship in Islam. Worship should not mean the conquest of fear of Allah ﷻ over your heart during prostration and the waning of such fear into greed, hostility and the like as soon as your prostration is over.

ARE WE MJSL MS?

Otherwise, what is the link between your heart and Allah ﷻ. Your heart is; in fact, 'loitering' at the worship stop or station and is refusing to proceed. Worship, it should be borne in mind, is going forward, but with intermittent stops for refill and boost. Islam is explicit in considering work as a type of worship as long as the heart's destination is the Way of Allah ﷻ :

ﷻ It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards east or west, but it is righteousness to believe in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the Messengers, to spend of your substance, out of love for him, for your kin, for orphans, for the needy, for the wayfarer, for those who ask, and for the ransom of slaves; to be steadfast in prayer, and practice regular charity; to fulfil the contracts which you have made; and to be firm and patient, in pain (or suffering) and adversity, and throughout all periods of panic. Such are the people of truth, the Allah-fearing. ﷻ (*Al-Baqara:177*)

Early Muslims were also aware of the fact that Islam means supremacy:

ﷻ Do not weaken or grieve; you shall be the upper ones if you are believers. ﷻ (*Al-Imran:139*)

Supremacy is one of the believers' attribute, and is not attained through a material or immaterial force, affluence, power, production, tribalism or the like. Rather, it is derived from *al-Iman* (faith) only. Bear in mind that this is

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

not a flattery devised by Allah ﷻ on His Servants the believers. It is a message to them that they should remain steadfast and firm toward the truth.

A believing person, who is guided by Allah's ﷻ Guidance to the planes of the universe and life, is; in fact, the highest creature because he has a stronger grip of the universe than those who lack the blessing of *Iman*. Further, his (the believing individual) knowledge of Allah ﷻ, the universe and life is broader than the rest of the creatures. Also, his idea about man, life and universe is inconceivably bigger. It is this broad knowledge and great idea about man and human life that place him in such a supreme status and empowers him with assets of material and immaterial forces. Hence, such supremacy materialises itself in real life just as it has in the soul.

Early Muslims were aware of this reality. Every time faith landed in their hearts, they would feel like new persons, better and higher than other ignorant creatures on earth. To illustrate, guidance to the notion of *Tawheed* discloses along the way the triviality and uselessness of worshipping idols and pumps a feeling of superiority over such type of worship. This was just part of the issue of superiority, for idolatry was not a sheer creed (*Aqida*) which the Muslim attempted to challenge with his thought and conscience. It was both a material and immaterial force that manifests itself in affluence, power, greed, revenge and the like. These are the challenges the early Muslims managed to transcend despite their (Muslims) small powerless number.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

So, their triumph was not a regurgitation of ideologies and emotions, but superiority with an asset in real life which enabled them to challenge such material and immaterial forces exemplified in the falsehood of *al-Jahiliyya* (ignorance) which stood in the way of the believers and strove to destroy them by any means.

Early Muslims triumphed over a power that outnumbered them both in material and human force when they fought the Persians and Romans. When the Muslims confronted the Persians and Romans, they did not emerge victorious because of their large number, wealth, weaponry, war tactics, Arabism, civilization or the like. On the contrary, they won because of one factor: *faith*. They felt superior because they were utterly convinced that by their *faith*, they were better than these two powers and what these two stood for. For them all these were deviations since none of these was guided towards the Path of Allah ﷻ.

When a people such as early Muslims sought superiority through *faith*, there is so much to accomplish in real life: early Muslims did acquire knowledge, learn war tactics and civilization, and thus became an unprecedented super power on earth, rapidly expanding east and west, spreading guidance, annihilating falsehood and overcoming any hurdles on its way.

Every time the Muslims achieved victory and established their superiority, it was not because of money, army, knowledge or civilization. Rather, it was

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

their sincere *faith*. After victory, the Muslims increased in the number of soldiers in the army, increased in wealth, knowledge and civilization. Their inward superiority with *faith* translated into outward superiority which manifested itself in possessing a large army, wealth, scientific knowledge and an advanced civilization.

Early Muslims realized from the Qur'an and *Sunna* that man is a real force on earth. They understood from the Qur'an that man is Allah's □ deputy on earth:

□ Behold, your Lord said to the angels: 'I will create a vicegerent on earth.' □
(*Al-Baqara:30*)

charged with the task of inhabiting earth and developing life there by working hard:

□ O you man! Verily you are ever toiling on towards your Lord, painfully toiling, but you shall meet Him. □ (*Al-Inshiqaq:6*)

And to carry out this task, Allah □ has made so many of His Creations at the service of man:

□ And He has subjected to you, as from him, all that is in the heavens and on earth. □ (*Al-Jathiyya:13*)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Yet, man still has to figure out how:

□ It is He who has made the earth manageable for you, so traverse you through its tracts and enjoy of the sustenance which He furnishes □

They also understood that

□ Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves. □ (*Ar-Ra'd:11*)

It is true to say that everything in this universe takes place by the Will of Allah □, but Allah □ has made man His Deputy by assigning him a positive role in life. Hence, it is man's will now that makes history. If you closely consider the meaning of the verse, you will notice that the second part makes change possible, yet this change is conditional in the sense that it must come from us. This is a condition put forward by Allah □, the Creator of the Universe, and this means that once we fulfil the condition, Allah □ will then change us for the better.

Early Muslims also understood from the Qur'an that corruption, exploitation and the like do not befall men without reasons. In fact, Allah □ inflicts these disasters because of man's sins:

□ Corruption, exploitation and bloodshed have appeared on land and at sea on account of the evil that men do and enormity of their sins. □ (*Ar-Rum:41*)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Having come to grips with these realities, early Muslims realised that they should work hard by themselves on this earth and that the religion they believed in would not spread or expand by itself, though Allah ﷻ is Capable of doing so. On the contrary, they believed they had to work hard for its diffusion and expansion, and any weakness on their part would equally affect this religion. They were convinced that they had to remain constantly alert for their own sake, for the Muslim society they lived in, and the world around them. Otherwise, there would be no victory, power, superiority or sovereignty because these could only be achieved through *faith*. This is exactly what is inferred from the following verse:

ﷻ O you who believe! Persevere in patience and constancy, vie in such perseverance, strengthen each other and fear Allah that you may prosper. ﷻ
(*Al-Imran:200*)

In a long and fascinating comparison between the Hindu, Christian, Muslim and Marxist view on the notion of history, Wilfred Smith said: "Like the Marxist but unlike the Hindu, the Muslim believes that what happens on earth has a permanent and inevitable significance. Creating a life for the group on earth on secure grounds is an inevitable matter. Compared to other attempts to prevail justice, the Islamic attempt has undoubtedly been the most serious and concerted one, even before the rise of Marxism. However and, unlike Marxism, Islam considers that every event that takes place in this

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

life is due to and ought to be interpreted in the light of two factors. Every movement man makes is compatible with others in the afterlife and the timely world. The ongoing line of worldly matters is a display of the tasks a group achieves; at the same time, it is the sum total of individual distinctive tasks for which each individual will be summoned on the Day of Judgment to task for. This means that every act in this life will obviously have different results in this life and different results in the Hereafter. In other words, every act should be weighed by itself as it is weighed by its connection with historical development. The metaphysician would claim that such judgment on man's act is closer to the objective reality of the world we live in than any one-sided view which denies the existence of moral values that are higher than the ongoing status-quo. History has a broad meaning, yet its meaning does not end in itself. Rather, there are criteria and standards higher than the events and milestones of which history is composed. It is by these criteria and standards that these historical events may and should be judged. In fact, they are judged through action (in the Islamic view).” [7]

Such was the concept of Islam in the souls of early Muslims. The outcome of such concept with its fundamentals and upshots gave the Muslim society certain characteristics that were distinctive from the other societies before and after them. This was a fact noted down by historians, both Muslims and Orientalists. This distinctive feature lied in an unshakeable belief in and obedience to Allah ﷻ and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ .

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

And differences between people with regards to their compliance with Islamic precepts remain ongoing just as their decline in reaching a high status in worshipping does. Both tendencies; nevertheless, do not change anything in reality which should be an attribute of the entire society: the attribute of sincere and unshakeable obedience to Allah ﷻ and Muhammad ﷺ.

Never in history has *-in other than the Muslim society-* there been a society which tried to execute Allah's ﷻ Commands and establish a society based on His(ﷻ) Divine Law as a result of its serious and sincere *faith*; the faith which ensconces itself in the depths of souls and conscience.

Every member of this society *-in his nature of being Muslim-* feels that he is entrusted with certain undisputable and inescapable tasks even when his spirit weakens. This is a weakness which one acknowledges, but which does not let one relapse or wonder that his judgment in the matter is more valid or better than Allah ﷻ and Muhammad's ﷺ.

Every member of this society feels that he is entrusted with the task of obeying Allah ﷻ and executing His Commands, of behaving in the way prescribed by Allah ﷻ down to the last detail such as walking or sitting.

Every member of this society feels that there is no difference between what is minor and major, important and trivial, necessary and unnecessary in these duties, except what Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ permit. In this case, the Muslim has the choice. The obligations that are stipulated in the Qur'an

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

and Sunna are to be complied with and fulfilled, and such compliance and execution must be serious and sincere, and coupled with *faith* in Allah ﷻ and the belief that a person is not counted as a true Muslim unless he fulfills such obligations to the last detail and in the fashion prescribed by Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ. A case in point is brushing one's teeth with *siwak* and *Jihad* in a battle so that Muslims make the connection between the two to find out by themselves that one of their victories in the battles they fought was delayed because they neglected brushing their teeth with *siwak*. This way, they would remind each other of this negligence, and deserve victory accordingly.

Every member of this society feels that he has obligations to fulfill both toward himself and toward his community. **Obligations toward himself**, as stated above, include creating out of his self; that is feelings, thoughts, and practical conduct a Muslim image as compatible as possible with the true Muslim image dictated by the Qur'an and *Sunna*. He should; thus, love people and hold no grudges against them. He should not backbite people or strip them of their dignity. He should not deceive, cheat or trick people. He should not pretend to be sick and stop working while he is capable of working. In short, he should fulfill all trusts, beginning with the trust of *faith* in Allah ﷻ and extending to other trusts such as acts of worship, and worldly contracts.

As for his obligations toward his community, this includes his contributions to making the society he lives in as Islamic as possible. Simply put, he should not content himself with just fulfilling his obligations toward himself. On

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

the contrary, to achieve this Muslim image for himself and be exemplary, he should strive to help society achieve this Muslim image, sustaining all the hardships and obstacles that he may encounter in this mission

From this standpoint, early society was the embodiment of this bright and pure image in values, politics, economy, social relations, intellectual, spiritual, practical and military activities, or in any other aspects of life. In other words, a Muslim person never felt that he would worship Allah ﷻ in the fashion he pleased and away from the society he lived in. Likewise, a female Muslim never felt that she would worship Allah ﷻ in the fashion she pleased by behaving, dressing, and dealing with man as she pleased, oblivious to the deviations of her society

In fact, both felt that they were shouldering a huge burden both toward themselves and toward society, and such burden required them to keep their eyes open on everything their society came across. Such alertness made early Muslims feel that they were accountable before Allah ﷻ and that they should try themselves before summoned by Allah ﷻ to do so. It is this awareness that made them Muslim.

Hence, that is why those Muslims felt a kind of superiority because they felt they were executing Allah's ﷻ Commands. Such *pure* feeling never gave way to any thought that the enemy was better than them because of his army, wealth, knowledge, war tactics or advanced civilisation. Any thought of this

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Kindle Library
It would have undermined their steadfastness and courage. The key to their victory was: They were the believers and the ones who obeyed Allah ﷻ and His Messenger. Hence, they were the superior, and any external or foreign force on earth meant nothing to them.

By obeying Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ, they became the most powerful force on earth. This feeling did not emanate from victory in the war though the latter was a milestone in itself. Rather, it emanated from the fact that Islam surged like an 'avalanche'.

The systems and civilisations Islam encountered on its way were moulded by Islam and; thus, became Islamic systems and civilisations, and then spread on every inch trodden by Muslim feet. The 'knowledge' which Islam found in the conquered territories was adopted, enriched and then turned into Islamic knowledge which benefitted not only Muslims but also *every* learner on earth. In his *Modern Trends in Islam*, Gibb states: "It goes without saying that close and detailed observation made by Muslim researchers significantly contributed to the advancement of scientific knowledge, and thanks to these observations that the empirical method reached Europe in the Middle Ages." In his *Making Humanity*, Brivolt admitted: "Science was one of the most contributions made by the Arab civilisation to the modern world...Yet, science was not the only factor which revived Europe. There were other several influences from the Islamic civilisation which sent their lifelines. Though the Islamic influence can be felt in every aspect of Europe's prosperity,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

it manifests itself more in the forces which give the modern world that distinctive drive: natural sciences and the spirit of scientific research ”

Add to this other systems of life, traditions and values which this Muslim group managed to spread and plant in the edifice of humanity even after the years of decline when the Islamic world neglected its duties. However, the general picture of the Islamic concept according to early Muslims will not be constructed in our minds nor will it appear to us until we see, besides this general picture, a realistic picture of the Islamic life as represented in some examples of the Muslim society.

Models From The Muslim Society

As mentioned early on, the general concepts of Islam cannot take on the feature 'Islamic' unless they materialise themselves in the Muslim society; that is to say, assimilated, lived up to and implemented in real life: *actions speak louder than words*.

And for us to single out *the* models of implementation of these concepts from the Muslim society, we *must* draw upon the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and his revered and brave companions who went down in history as 'great men'. And this is only normal as I pointed out, for the Prophet ﷺ has been an exemplary person: everything he did; his words and deeds were obvious to the Muslims around him so that they could take a leaf out of his book. The companions of the Prophet ﷺ were distinguished human beings, yet they were *very rare* human beings who reached the highest status in human existence. Hence, following in their footsteps in every aspect of life is a natural thing since the purpose is to give a complete and clear image of the Muslim society and the slice of history it earned.

It is beyond the scope of the present work to delve deep into the Prophet's ﷺ life (seerah) or that of the heroism of venerable companions, though they embody the true work of Islam and its fruit. Rather, this work is to show, in addition to all this, examples of 'human weakness' in Muslim society,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

examples of the downfall. It will, on one hand, give a realistic picture of this society in all its aspects and show people that Islam is a realistic system in its confrontation of the human soul and human reality. Put differently, Islam neither overburdens them, expects from them a supremacy that does not wither nor forces them to strip themselves of their humanity. On the contrary, Islam treats them as humans and expects them to contribute according to their capabilities.

A further goal of the present work is to show the reader how Islam in earlier Islamic societies dealt with lapses of weakness and bolstered the morale of the Muslims at that time. Here are some examples:

The Story of the Bedouin

Abu Hurayrah ؓ reported: "A bedouin came asking for something from the Prophet ؐ. He gave the man something and said, 'Have I been good to you?' The bedouin said, 'No, you have not and you have not done well.' The Muslims became angry and went for him. The Prophet ؐ indicated that they should hold off. The Prophet ؐ got up and went into his house. Next, he ؐ sent for him and added something to his gift and said, 'Have I been good to you?' The bedouin replied, 'Yes, may Allah ؑ repay you well in family and tribe.' The Prophet ؐ said, 'You said what you said and that angered my Companions. If you like, say what you said in my presence before them so as to remove what they harbour in their breasts against you.' He said, 'Yes.' He came back later

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

and the Prophet ﷺ said, 'This bedouin said what he said and then we gave him more. He claims that he is satisfied Isn't that so?' He said, 'Yes, may Allah ﷻ repay you well in your family and tribe.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'The example of this man and me is like a man who has a she-camel which bolts from him. People chase it and they only make it shy away more. The owner calls to them to stay clear of him and his she-camel, saying, I am more compassionate and better to it than you.' He goes in front of it and takes some clods of dirt and drives it back until it comes and kneels. He saddles and mounts it. If I had given you your heads when the man said what he said, you would have killed him and he would have entered the Fire.'"[8]

The Story of Kaab Ibn Malik ﷺ

***"Be happy with the best day that you have got ever
since your mother delivered you..."***

It is with those words that the Prophet ﷺ welcomed Kaab ﷺ on the day Allah ﷻ revealed Kaab's ﷺ true and sincere repentance. Let us leave Kaab Ibn Malik ﷺ himself tell us the story

Kaab ﷺ said: "I did not remain behind the Prophet ﷺ in any battle that he fought except the *Battle of Tabuk*, and I failed to take part in the *Battle of Badr*, but Allah ﷻ did not admonish anyone who had not participated in it, for in fact, the Prophet ﷺ had gone out in search of the caravan of Quraish till Allah ﷻ made them (i.e. the Muslims) and their enemy meet without any

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

appointment. I witnessed the night of *Al-'Aqaba*(pledge) with the Prophet ﷺ when we pledged for Islam, and I would not exchange it for the *Battle of Badr* although the *Battle of Badr* is more popular amongst the people than it (i.e. *Al-'Aqaba* pledge). As for my news (in this *Battle of Tabuk*), I had never been stronger or wealthier than I was when I remained behind the Prophet ﷺ in that battle.

By Allah ﷻ, never had I two she-camels before, but I had then at the time of this battle. Whenever the Prophet ﷺ wanted to make a battle, he used to hide his intention by apparently referring to different battle till it was the time of that battle (of *Tabuk*) which the Prophet ﷺ fought in severe heat, facing a long journey, desert, and the great number of enemy. So the Prophet ﷺ announced to the Muslims clearly (their destination) so that they might get prepared for their battle. So he informed them clearly of the destination he was going to. The Prophet ﷺ was accompanied by a large number of Muslims who could not be listed in a book namely, a register. Any man who intended to be absent would think that the matter would remain hidden unless Allah ﷻ revealed it through Divine Revelation. So the Messenger ﷺ fought that battle at the time when the fruits had ripened and the shade looked pleasant. The Messenger of Allah ﷻ and his companions prepared for the battle and I started to go out in order to get myself ready along with them, but I returned without doing anything. I would say to myself, 'I can do that.' So I kept on delaying it every now and then till the people got ready and Allah's Messenger ﷺ and the Muslims along with him departed, and I had not prepared anything for

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

my departure, and I said, I will prepare myself (for departure) one or two days after him, and then join them.' In the morning following their departure, I went out to get myself ready but returned having done nothing. Then again in the next morning, I went out to get ready but returned without doing anything.

Such was the case with me till they hurried away and the battle was missed (by me). Even then I intended to depart to take them over. I wish I had done so! But it was not in my destiny. So, after the departure of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, whenever I went out and walked amongst the people (i.e., the remaining persons), it grieved me that I could see none around me, but one accused of hypocrisy or one of those weak men whom Allah ﷻ had excused. Allah's Messenger ﷺ did not remember me till he reached Tabuk. So while he was sitting amongst the people in Tabuk, he said, 'What did Kaab do?' A man from Banu Salama said, 'O Allah's Messenger! He has been stopped by his two Burdas (i.e. garments) and his looking at his own flanks with pride.' Then Muad Ibn Jabal ﷺ said, 'What a bad thing you have said! By Allah! O Allah's Messenger! We know nothing about him but good.' Allah's Messenger kept silent."

Kaab Ibn Malik ﷺ added, "When I heard that he (i.e. the Prophet ﷺ) was on his way back to Madina, I got dipped in my concern, and began to think of false excuses, saying to myself, 'How can I avoid his anger tomorrow?' And I took the advice of wise member of my family in this matter. Then it was said

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

that Allah's Messenger ﷺ had come near all the evil false excuses abandoned from my mind and I knew well that I could never come out of this problem by forging a false Statement. Then I decided firmly to speak the truth. So Allah's Messenger ﷺ arrived in the morning, and whenever he returned from a journey, he used to visit the mosque first of all and offer a two-Rak'at prayer therein and then sit for the people. So when he had done all that (this time), those who had failed to join the battle (of Tabuk) came and started offering (false) excuses and taking oaths before him. Their wereover eighty men; Allah's Messenger ﷺ accepted the excuses they had expressed, took their pledge of allegiance, asked for Allah's ﷻ Forgiveness for them, and left the secrets of their hearts for Allah ﷻ to judge. Then I came to him, and when I greeted him, he smiled a smile of an angry person and then said, 'Come on.' So I came walking till I sat before him. He said to me, 'What stopped you from joining us. Had you not purchased an animal for carrying you?' I answered, "Yes, O Allah's Messenger! But by Allah ﷻ, if I were sitting before any person from among the people of the world other than you, I would have avoided his anger with an excuse.

By Allah ﷻ, I have been bestowed with the power of speaking fluently and eloquently, but by Allah ﷻ, I knew well that if today I tell you a lie to seek your favor, Allah ﷻ would surely make you angry with me in the near future, but if I tell you the truth, though you will get angry because of it, I hope for Allah's ﷻ Forgiveness. Really, by Allah ﷻ, there was no excuse for me. By Allah ﷻ, I had never been stronger or wealthier than I was when I remained

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

behind you.' Then Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'As regards this man, he has surely told the truth. So get up till Allah ﷻ decides your case.' I got up, and many men of Banu Salama followed me and said to me. 'By Allah ﷻ, we never witnessed you doing any sin before this. Surely, you failed to offer excuse to Allah's Messenger ﷺ as the others who did not join him, have offered. The prayer of Allah's Messenger ﷺ to Allah ﷻ to forgive you would have been sufficient for you.' By Allah ﷻ, they continued blaming me so much that I intended to return (to the Prophet) and accuse myself of having told a lie, but I said to them, 'Is there anybody else who has met the same fate as I have?' They replied, 'Yes, there are two men who have said the same thing as you have, and to both of them was given the same order as given to you.' I said, 'Who are they?' They replied, Murara Ibn Ar-Rabi Al-Amri ﷺ and Hilal Ibn Umayya Al-Waqifi ﷺ ' By that they mentioned to me two pious men who had attended the *Battle of Badr*, and in whom there was an example for me. So I did not change my mind when they mentioned them to me. Allah's Messenger ﷺ forbade all the Muslims to talk to us, the three aforesaid persons out of all those who had remained behind in that battle. So we kept away from the people and they changed their attitude towards us till the very land (where I lived) appeared strange to me as if I did not know it

We remained in that condition for fifty nights. As regards my two fellows, they remained in their houses and kept on weeping, but I was the youngest of them and the firmest of them, so I used to go out and witness the prayers along with the Muslims and roam about in the markets, but none would talk

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

to me, and I would come to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and greet him while he was sitting in his gathering after the prayer, and I would wonder whether the Prophet ﷺ did move his lips in return to my greetings or not. Then I would offer my prayer near to him and look at him stealthily. When I was busy with my prayer, he would turn his face towards me, but when I turned my face to him, he would turn his face away from me. When this harsh attitude of the people lasted long, I walked till I scaled the wall of the garden of Abu Qatada who was my cousin and dearest person to me, and I offered my greetings to him. By Allah ﷻ, he did not return my greetings. I said, 'O Abu Qatada! I beseech you by Allah ﷻ! Do you know that I love Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ? He kept quiet. I asked him again, beseeching him by Allah ﷻ, but he remained silent. Then I asked him again in the Name of Allah. He said, "Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ know it better.' Thereupon my eyes flowed with tears and I returned and jumped over the wall." Kaab ﷺ added, "While I was walking in the market of Madina, suddenly I saw a Nabati (i.e. a Christian farmer) from the Nabatis of Sham who came to sell his grains in Madina, saying, 'Who will lead me to Kaab Ibn Malik ﷺ?' The people began to point (me) out for him till he came to me and handed me a letter from the king of Ghassan in which the following was written:

"To proceed, I have been informed that your friend (i.e. the Prophet ﷺ) has treated you harshly. Anyhow, Allah ﷻ does not let you live at a place where you feel inferior and your right is lost. So join us, and we will console you."

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

When I read it, I said to myself, 'This is also a sort of a test.' Then I took the letter to the oven and made a fire therein by burning it. When forty out of the fifty nights elapsed, behold! There came to me the messenger of Allah's Messenger ﷺ and said, 'Allah's Messenger ﷺ orders you to keep away from your wife,' I said, 'Should I divorce her; or else! what should I do?' He said, 'No, only keep aloof from her and do not cohabit her.' The Prophet ﷺ sent the same message to my two fellows. Then I said to my wife. 'Go to your parents and remain with them till Allah ﷻ gives His Verdict in this matter." Kaab ﷺ added, "The wife of Hilal Ibn Umayya ﷺ came to the Messenger ﷺ and said, 'O Allah's Messenger ﷺ! Hilal Ibn Umayya ﷺ is a helpless old man who has no servant to attend on him. Do you dislike that I should serve him?' He said, 'No (you can serve him) but he should not come near you.' She said, 'By Allah ﷻ, he has no desire for anything. By, Allah ﷻ, he has never ceased weeping till his case began till this day of his.'

On that, some of my family members said to me, 'Will you also ask Allah's Messenger ﷺ to permit your wife (to serve you) as he has permitted the wife of Hilal Ibn Umayya ﷺ to serve him?' I said, 'By Allah ﷻ, I will not ask the permission of Allah's Messenger ﷺ regarding her, for I do not know What Allah's Messenger ﷺ would say if I asked him to permit her (to serve me) while I am a young man.' Then I remained in that state for ten more nights after that till the period of fifty nights was completed starting from the time when Allah's Messenger ﷺ prohibited the people from talking to us. When I had offered the Fajr prayer on the 50th morning on the roof of one of our houses

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

and while I was sitting in the condition which Allah ﷻ described (in the Qur'an) i.e. my very soul seemed straitened to me and even the earth seemed narrow to me for all its spaciousness, there I heard the voice of one who had ascended the mountain of Sala' calling with his loudest voice, 'O Kaab Ibn Malik! Be happy (by receiving good tidings).' I fell down in prostration before Allah ﷻ, realizing that relief has come. Allah's Messenger ﷺ had announced the acceptance of our repentance by Allah ﷻ when he had offered the Fajr prayer. The people then went out to congratulate us. Some bringers of good tidings went out to my two fellows, and a horseman came to me in haste, and a man of Banu Aslam came running and ascended the mountain and his voice was swifter than the horse. When he (i.e. the man) whose voice I had heard, came to me conveying the good tidings, I took off my garments and dressed him with them; and by Allah ﷻ, I owned no other garments than them on that day. Then I borrowed two garments and wore them and went to Allah's Messenger ﷺ.

The people started receiving me in batches, congratulating me on Allah's ﷻ Acceptance of my repentance, saying, 'We congratulate you on Allah's ﷻ Acceptance of your repentance.'" Kaab ﷺ further said, "When I entered the mosque. I saw Allah's Messenger ﷺ sitting with the people around him. Talha Ibn Ubaydallah ﷺ swiftly came to me, shook hands with me and congratulated me. By Allah ﷻ, none of the Muhajirun (i.e. emigrants) got up for me except him (i.e. Talha ﷺ), and I will never forget this for Talha ﷺ." Kaab ﷺ added, "When I greeted Allah's Messenger he, his face being bright

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

with joy, said 'Be happy with the best day that you have got ever since your mother delivered you.'" Kaab \square added, "I said to the Prophet \square 'Is this forgiveness from you or from Allah \square ?' He said, 'No, it is from Allah \square ' Whenever Allah's Messenger \square became happy, his face would shine as if it were a piece of moon, and we all knew that characteristic of him. When I sat before him, I said, 'O Allah's Messenger \square ! Because of the acceptance of my repentance I will give up all my wealth as alms for the Sake of Allah \square and His Messenger \square . Allah's Messenger \square said, 'Keep some of your wealth, as it will be better for you' I said, 'So I will keep my share from Khaybar with me,' and added, 'O Allah's Messenger! Allah \square has saved me for telling the truth; so it is a part of my repentance not to tell but the truth as long as I am alive By Allah \square , I do not know anyone of the Muslims whom Allah has helped for telling the truth more than me Since I have mentioned that truth to Allah's Messenger \square till today, I have never intended to tell a lie. I hope that Allah \square will also save me (from telling lies) the rest of my life. So Allah \square revealed to His Messenger the Verse:

\square Allah has turned in mercy to the Prophet, and to the Muhajirin and the Ansar who followed him in the hour of hardship After the hearts of a party of them had almost swerved aside, then turned He unto them in mercy Lo! He is Full of Pity, Merciful for them. And to the three also (did He turn in mercy) who were left behind: when the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for them, and their own souls were straitened for them till they bethought them that there is no refuge from Allah save toward Him. Then turned He unto them in

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

mercy that they (too) might turn (repentant unto Him). Lo! Allah! He is the Relenting, the Merciful. O you who believe! Be careful of your duty to Allah, and be with the truthful. □ (*Tawba* 117-119)

By Allah □, Allah □ has never bestowed upon me, apart from His guiding me to Islam, a Greater Blessing than the fact that I did not tell a lie to Allah's Messenger □ which would have caused me to perish as those who have told a lie perished, for Allah □ described those who told lies with the worst description He ever attributed to anybody else.

□ They will swear by Allah unto you, when you return unto them, that you may let them be. Let them be, for lo! They are unclean, and their abode is hell as the reward for what they used to earn. They swear unto you, that you may accept them. Though you accept them, Allah □ verily accepts not wrongdoing folk. □ (*Tawba* 95-96)

Kaab □ added, "We, the three persons, differed altogether from those whose excuses Allah's Messenger □ accepted when they swore to him. He took their pledge of allegiance and asked Allah to forgive them, but Allah's Messenger □ left our case pending till Allah □ gave His Judgment about it.

What Allah □ said (in this verse) does not indicate our failure to take part in the battle, but it refers to the deferment of making a decision by the Prophet □ about our case in contrast to the case of those who had taken an oath before him and he excused them by accepting their excuses."[\[9\]](#)

The Story of Abdullah Ibn Ubay (Leader of the Hypocrites)

After the battle with Banu al-Mustalaq, the Prophet ﷺ remained in camp at Muraisi' for a few days, towards the end of which an untoward incident threatened to assume dangerous proportions, but was rendered innocuous by the wise handling of the Prophet ﷺ. It so happened that a servant of Umar ﷺ, of the name of Jahjah, went to the spring of Muraisi' to fetch water. At the same time Sinan, one of the confederates of Ansar, also arrived at the spring for the same purpose. An altercation ensued between these two ignorant persons in the course of which Jahjah inflicted an injury upon Sinan, who started shouting for Ansar to come to his help. Jahjah, on his side, began to shout for emigrants (*al-Muhajirun*) to come to his help, in consequence of which several Ansar and emigrants were attracted to the spot so that a confrontation threatened, and might have broken out had not a number of responsible persons on both sides arrived in time who reprimanded both sides and averted the threatened conflict. When the Prophet ﷺ was apprised of the incident, he expressed his disapproval and observed that the incident had been a manifestation of the unruly spirit of pre-Islamic days (*al-Jahiliyya*). The incident was thus closed, and no more would have been thought of it, had

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

not Abdullah Ibn Ubay \square , the leader of the disaffected, unfortunately sought to revive it

Abdullah Ibn Ubay (Leader of the Hypocrites) harangued his followers and concluded with, 'This you have brought upon yourselves, by inviting these strangers to come amongst us. Now wait till we return to Madina; then the most honoured one among us shall surely expel the one meanest among us.' Zaid Ibn Arqam \square , a sincere young man, mentioned this utterance of Abdullah \square to his uncle, who reported it to the Prophet \square . Omar \square , who was then in the company of the Prophet \square , was outraged, and sought the Prophet's \square leave to strike down the leader of the disaffected. But the Prophet \square counselled forbearance, as he did not wish it said that he was keen on killing his own followers. He sent for Abdullah Ibn Ubay \square and some of his associates and inquired from them what had happened. They swore that none of them had said anything like that which was attributed to them. Some Ansar urged that Zaid Ibn Arqam \square might have been mistaken.

It was high noon and the heat was intense, and though the Prophet \square generally avoided marching at that time of day, he decided that in the circumstances it was best to start the march immediately. Everyone became ready to set forth.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Usyad Ibn Hudayr ؓ, chief of Aws, was curious to discover the reason for this unusual direction of the Prophet ﷺ. He went to him and submitted, 'Messenger of Allah, you do not normally march at this time of day. What has caused you to start the march at this time?' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'Usyad, have you not heard that Abdullah Ibn Ubay ؓ says that, arriving in Madina, the most honoured one among us shall expel the meanest one among us?' Usyad ؓ submitted, 'Messenger of Allah, you can certainly expel Abdullah from Madina, for undoubtedly you are the most honoured among us, and he is the meanest one. But, Messenger of Allah, you are aware that before your arrival in Madina, Abdullah was highly esteemed among his people and they were planning to make him their king. Your arrival frustrated that project and he has since been full of envy towards you. You need pay no attention to his nonsense, and may extend him your forbearance.'

The Prophet ﷺ dismissed the whole affair, but Zaid's ؓ report was later confirmed by revelation. The Prophet ﷺ sent for Abdullah Ibn Ubay and his associates and told them that Zaid's ؓ report had been confirmed, and then directed Omar ؓ to announce the immediate departure of the force for Medina.

Shortly after, Abdullah ؓ came to the Prophet ﷺ much agitated, and submitted, 'Messenger of Allah, I have heard that you intend to order the execution of my father on account of his arrogance and mischief. If that is

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

your decision, I would submit that you should appoint me as my father's executioner and I would immediately carry out your direction; but I would urge that you should not appoint anyone else to carry out your direction, lest, out of my weakness, I should thereafter bear a grudge against that person, and thus incur the displeasure of Allah ﷻ.' The Prophet ﷺ replied to him, 'Have no fear. So long as your father remains with us, we shall make our companionship pleasant unto him.' But the son was so incensed against his father that when the Muslim force approached Madina, the son blocked the father's way and swore that he would not let him proceed any further unless he confessed that the Prophet ﷺ was the most honoured, and he, Abdullah Ibn Ubayy, the meanest of the people of Madina. The father was thus compelled to confess as his son required and it was only then that the son left him free to proceed.

What a *faith*? Isn't it the *faith* which elevated the believers, simple human beings, to the pinnacle of supremacy? This is the wonderful and sincere parts in this religion when people discover its reality or when they themselves become the instrument of such reality.[\[10\]](#)

Rushing to execute Allah's ﷻ Command

Anas Ibn Malik ﷺ reported: "I was the cup-bearer of some people in the house of Abu Talha ﷺ on the day when liquor was forbidden. Their liquor had been prepared from dry dates or fresh dates when the announcer made

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

the announcement. He (Abu Talha \square) said to me: 'Go out and find out (what the announcement is).' I got out (and found) an announcer making this announcement: 'Behold, liquor has been declared unlawful. He said: The liquor (was spilt and) flowed in the lanes of Madina. Abu Talha \square said to me: 'Go out and Spill it', and I did. All of us performed ablution, put on some musk, and then headed for the mosque.'"

Abu Burayda \square quoted his father as saying: "While we were sitting at our drinking place on the sand and we were three or four persons with a jug with us and drinking liquor for it was then lawful, then I left for the place of the Prophet \square and greeted him. The verse that prohibited alcohol drinking was then revealed:

\square "O you who believe! Intoxicants, Gambling, *Al-Ansaab* (i.e. animals that are slaughtered on stone-altars for idols) and Arrows (that are used for seeking luck or decision) are an abomination of the Satan's handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that in order that you may be successful. Satan wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you with intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from Salaah (the Prayer). Will you then not abstain?" \square (*Al-Maida*: 90-91)

I afterwards went to my companions and read the verse to them. One of them was holding his alcohol in his hand having drunk some and the rest was still

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

in his cup, but he turned the cup just below his upper lip. They all poured away what was in their jug and said:

“We abstain, Our Lord! We abstain, Our Lord!”

The verse was revealed when they were holding their cups in their hands and it was the command of Allah ﷻ that prevented them from reaching their lips. Those who were holding cups of alcohol broke them and those who have taken a mouthful coughed it out. Containers of alcohol were broken in Madina. Such is the commandment of Allah ﷻ. One should have no option except to submit and surrender to it. The result of surrendering to Allah ﷻ is: “there were no trafficking gangs, no recourse of the state to the imposition of death penalty, imprisonment, confiscation of wealth and property. Rather, there was the tendency of simple implementation and compliance with the commands of the Qur’an.”[\[11\]](#)

The Story of Hijab

Safiyya Bint Shayba was quoted as saying: “We mentioned the women of Quraysh and their virtues in the presence of Aisha, who remarked: “The women of Quraysh are good, but by Allah ﷻ I have never seen any better than the women of the Ansar, or any who believed the Book of Allah ﷻ more

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

strongly or had more faith in the Revelation. When *An-Nur* chapter was revealed:

□ And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinarily) appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands... □ (*An-Nur*:31); their menfolk came to them and recited to them what had been revealed, and there was not one woman among them who did not go to her apron, and the following morning they prayed wrapped up as if there were crows on their heads.” (Abu Daud)

The Story of Abu Basir □ (Utba Ibn Usayd): Treaty put to trial

Not long after the Prophet □ had arrived in Madina, Abu Basir □ broke away from the Quraysh and escaped to him. He was followed by two emissaries of the Quraysh to bring him back. They reminded the Prophet □ of the treaty given by him and he promptly handed over Abu Basir □ to them. Abu Basir □ asked: “Are You returning me to the polytheists O Messenger of Allah?” The Prophet □ replied, “Just go, Allah □ will work out something for you.” [\[12\]](#)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Hudayfa Ibn Al-Yaman's Mission Impossible

Hudayfa \square reported: "That night, we were all seated in rows. Abu Sufyan and his men -the *mushrikun* of Makkah- were in front of us. The Jewish tribe of *Banu Quraydah* were at our rear and we were afraid of them because of our wives and children. The night was pitch dark. Never before was there a darker night nor a wind so strong. So dark was the night that no one could see his fingers and the blast of the wind was like the peel of thunder. The hypocrites began to ask the Prophet \square for permission to leave, saying, 'Our houses are exposed to the enemy.' Anyone who asked the Prophet's permission to leave was allowed to go. Many thus sneaked away until we were left with about three hundred men. The Prophet \square then began a round of inspection passing us one by one until he reached me. I had nothing to protect me from the cold except a blanket belonging to my wife which scarcely reached my knees. He came nearer to me as I lay crouching on the ground and asked: 'Who is this?' 'Hudayfa,' I replied. 'Hudayfa?' he queried as I huddled myself closer to the ground too afraid to stand up because of the intense hunger and cold. 'Yes, O Messenger, I replied. 'Something is happening among the people (meaning the forces of Abu Sufyan). Infiltrate their encampment and bring me news of what's happening,' instructed the Prophet \square .

"At that moment I was the most terrified person of all and felt terribly cold. The Prophet \square prayed: 'O Lord, protect him from in front and from behind, from his right and from his left, from above and from below.' By Allah! No

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

sooner had the Prophet ﷺ completed his supplication than Allah ﷻ removed from my stomach all traces of fear and from my body all the punishing cold. As I turned to go, the Prophet ﷺ called me back to him and said: 'Hudayfa, on no account do anything among the people (of the opposing forces) until you come back to me.'

'Yes, I replied.'

I went on, inching my way under cover of darkness until I penetrated deep into the *mushrikin* camp and became just like one of them. Shortly afterwards, Abu Sufyan got up and began to address his men: "O people of the Quraysh, I am about to make a statement to you which I fear would reach Muhammad. Therefore, let every man among you look and make sure who is sitting next to him .." On hearing this, I immediately grasped the hand of the man next to me and asked, 'Who are you?' (thus putting him on the defensive and clearing myself). Abu Sufyan went on: "O people of the Quraysh, by God, you are not in a safe and secure place. Our horses and camels have perished. The Banu Quraydah have deserted us and we have had unpleasant news about them. We are buffeted by this bitterly cold wind. Our fires do not light and our uprooted tents offer no protection. So get moving. For myself, I am leaving " He went to his camel, untethered and mounted it. He struck it and it stood upright. If the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had not instructed me to do nothing until I returned to him, I would have killed Abu Sufyan there and then with an arrow. I returned to the Prophet ﷺ and found him standing on a blanket performing *Salat*.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

When he recognized me, he drew me close to his legs and threw one end of the blanket over me. I informed him of what had happened. He was extremely happy and joyful and gave thanks and praise to me."

It was through this delicate act and adventure that Hudayfa ؓ earned his place next to the Prophet ﷺ in Paradise [13]

This was one of the most horrifying moments Muslims experienced at the time. In fact, to put it metaphorically, they were profoundly shaken as Allah ﷻ says:

ﷻ In that situation were the believers tried, and were shaken mightily. ﷻ (Al-Ahzab:11)

They were human beings, flesh and blood, and Allah ﷻ did not overburden them or entrust them with tasks beyond their capabilities. More to the point, despite their *absolute* trust in Allah ﷻ and the glad tidings they had received from the Prophet ﷺ *glad tidings that transcended victory at that very moment to the promise of conquering Yemen, Syria, Maghreb and Mashriq*- the terror they faced did shake them and did strike in their hearts.

Bear in mind that despite this shaking, swerving of the eyes and reaching of the hearts to the throats, the bond between them and Allah ﷻ never severed. The Muslims eagerly waited for the subsequent victory. They considered their utter fear and shaking as a cause for awaiting victory. They believed strongly in Allah's ﷻ Promise that victory is looming:

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

□ Or do you think that you shall enter the Garden (of bliss) without such (trials) as came to those who passed away before you? They encountered suffering and adversity, and were so shaken in spirit that even the Messenger and those of faith who were with him cried: "When (will come) the help of Allah." Ah! Verily, the help of Allah is (always) near! □ (*Al-Baqara:214*)

Indeed, they were shaken and Allah's □ victory was imminent. Observe their positive attitude and steadfastness despite the sordid circumstances:

□ When the believers saw the Confederate forces, they said: "This is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us, and Allah and His Messenger told us what was true." And it only added to their faith and their zeal in obedience. □ (*Al-Ahzab:22*)

The verse implies that they knew that the terror was imminent, and that victory will follow. Their *already* strong belief was only further strengthened by such promise and victory.

These people were human beings who were helpless and still willing to sacrifice their selves with the shortcomings of human characteristics of weakness and emotions, and they were not required to transform into super humans. This is the purpose of their existence: they were created as human beings and they were predestined to remain so. Like any other human being, they experienced fear and hardships, yet, they clung tightly to the rope (utter trust in Allah □) thrown to them by Allah □. It was this lifeline

ARE WE MUJSLIMS?

which bolstered their spirit and; thus, made them an unprecedented model in the history of mankind. So, we need to know that they, after all, were human beings and that they reached the highest pinnacle prepared for man: preserving the characteristics of man, but having a bond with the heavens.

[14]

The Story of Maiz Ibn Malik

Maiz Ibn Malik came to the Prophet ﷺ insisting on confessing his sin of fornication with a slave girl. The Prophet ﷺ responded by turning away from him, then insisted that the couple must have just looked at each other, or only embraced or kissed; but Maiz persisted with his confession of actual intercourse. The Prophet ﷺ gave him ample opportunity to conceal his sin, and repent privately with the hopes of receiving Allah's ﷻ forgiveness. Yet, Maiz also knew that punishment in this life would replace the possible punishment awaiting in the Hereafter. So upon acknowledgement and confession of fornication, the Prophet ﷺ ordered the punishment (stoning to death) (*Al-Bukhari, Sunan Abu Dawud*).

The Story of the Woman from Ghamid

A woman belonging to the tribe of Ghamid came to the Prophet ﷺ and said that she had committed adultery and that she was pregnant. The Prophet ﷺ called her guardian., and then said to him, 'Be good to her, and when she

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

bears a child, bring her (to me).’ When she gave birth to the child, he brought her (to him). The Prophet ﷺ gave orders regarding her, and her clothes were tied to her. He then commanded that she be stoned to death. Next, the Prophet ordered the crowd to offer prayer over her body. Thereupon Umar ﷺ said: “Are you praying over her, Messenger of Allah, when she has committed fornication?” The Prophet said, “By Him in Whose hand my soul is, she has repented to such an extent that if it were divided among the seventy people of Madina, it would have been enough for them all. And what do you find better than the fact that she gave her life.

A Life of Piety

ﷺ O Prophet (Muhammad)! Say to your wives: “If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner (divorce). ﷺ (Al-Ahzab:28)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ opted for a life for himself and for his wives, not because of a shortage in life’s splendours –*in fact, there was a growing prosperity at the time resulting from the booty seized in conquering territories, yet months would go by without eating a proper meal*– but because of a tendency to go beyond the splendours of life and an aspiration to the Hereafter. Furthermore, Muhammad ﷺ was not obliged to behave in this way and command his family and companions to act likewise.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Accordingly, his wives were human beings, too. However despite their excellence, dignity and closeness to prophethood, their natural disposition to desire life's splendours remained active in their spirits. This is to say that once they saw prosperity, they approached the Prophet ﷺ for a review of their expenditure (*nafaqa*). Contrary to what they probably expected, the Prophet ﷺ sadly dismissed their proposal, for this was not what he had expected from them. He thought that they would be like him in aspiring to the Hereafter and discarding the splendours of life as temporal and low. So much so that his grief over the subject of their approach made him avoid his companions who could not bear it. They tried to visit him, but were not allowed in:

Jabir Ibn Abdullah ﷺ reported: "Abu Bakr ﷺ came and sought permission to see Allah's Messenger ﷺ. He found people sitting at his door and none amongst them had been granted permission, but it was granted to Abu Bakr ﷺ and he went in. Then came Omar ﷺ and he sought permission and it was granted to him, and he found the Prophet ﷺ sitting sad and silent with his wives around him. He (Omar ﷺ) said: 'I would say something which would make the Prophet ﷺ laugh, so he said: 'Messenger of Allah, I wish you had seen (the treatment meted out to) the daughter of Khadija when you asked me some money, and I got up and slapped her on her neck.' The Prophet ﷺ laughed and said: 'They are around me as you see, asking for extra money.' Abu Bakr ﷺ then got up and went to Aisha and slapped her on the neck, and Omar ﷺ stood up before Hafsa and slapped her saying: 'You ask Allah's Messenger ﷺ which he does not possess!' They said: 'By Allah ﷻ, we do not ask Allah's

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Messenger ﷺ for anything he does not possess.' Then he withdrew from them for a month or for twenty-nine days. Then this verse was revealed to him:

ﷻ O Prophet (Muhammad)! Say to your wives: "If you desire the life of this world, and its glitter, then come! I will make a provision for you and set you free in a handsome manner (divorce). ﷻ (Al-Ahzab:28)

He then went first to Aisha and said: 'I want to propound something to you, Aisha, but wish no hasty reply before you consult your parents' She said: 'Messenger of Allah, what is that?' He (the Prophet ﷺ) recited to her the verse, whereupon she said: 'Is it about you that I should consult my parents, Messenger of Allah? Nay, I choose Allah ﷻ, His Messenger, and the Last Abode; but I ask you not to tell any of your wives what I have said.' He ﷺ replied: 'Not one of them will ask me without my informing her. Allah ﷻ did not send me to be harsh, or cause harm, but He has sent me to teach and make things easy.'"

It is worth considering for a moment the event in this *Hadith*: On one hand, it determines a clear Islamic approach to values, draws the map of being aware of both this life and the Hereafter, tightens any loose ends between the values of this life and those of the Hereafter, and cleanses the heart of any obstacles that come between man and his utter submissiveness to Allah ﷻ.

On the other hand, the incident depicts the reality of the Prophet's ﷺ life and that of those who were close to him. The best thing in this reality is

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

that it was a life of people who did not strip themselves of their feelings and human characteristics despite their elevation to the pinnacle of excellence and distinction. In other words, human feelings and emotions did not die in those souls, but preserved their human characteristics and never posed any obstacles for the souls to rise to the highest forms of perfection expected of man.[\[15\]](#)

From these examples which combine between rare heroism and moments of weakness, there emerges a clear image of a typical early Muslim society whose members were aware of the true meaning of the concept of Islam, serious and highly appreciative of the true meaning of *faith*. Indeed, Islam is not a simple set of duties imposed on people. Rather, it is the real human existence. Islam does not consider man as a person who simply eats, drinks and desires without appreciating the universe and the status of man in such universe; that is, Allah's \square vicegerent.

Early Muslims were well-aware that man's status in Islam is more than just eating, drinking and desiring. Such was their true appreciation of man, which they derived from the Qur'an and *Sunna*, and experienced in their real life. Hence, they were entitled to dominate the land, and be the super power on earth which controlled and lead humanity to the Right Path.

In its true sense, Islam means placing man in its correct place, identifying man's capabilities, placing them in their correct place, and then activating them to perform their tasks.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

It was from such capabilities that a myriad of miracles emerged in the early Muslim society. History reveals that models listed above depict the most concerted attempt to build man's life on justice, and develop its material, spiritual, social, economic, scientific and practical aspects on a 'pure human' platform which did not *selfishly* confine wealth in the hands of the few, but spread it to reach even the crusaders (*as-salibiyyun*).

How has this noble image of *faith* which placed man in its correct place vis-à-vis the human existence strayed from the Right Path? Why have the Muslims of today reached this low status? Why have they confined the concept of Islam to mere acts of worship or, *ironically*, having a good intention (*an-niyya al-hasana*)?

It goes without saying that a considerable deviation is the answer. There is a stark contrast between the early Muslim society and contemporary societies, a contrast which would have gone as far as to separate between today's society and Islam were it not for the call to return to Islam. In other words, had it not been for the efforts of few people scattered around the Muslim world, who know the true meaning of the concept of Islam and who experience it in their daily lives and invite people to taste it, Islam and society would have been wide apart.

There is also no doubt that certain aggravating factors had an impact on the Muslim society and on the concept of Islam. It is unconceivable that such force has been wasted and that man's state went from the sublime to the

ARE WE MUSL MS?

ridiculous without adverse circumstances. The purpose of the next chapter is to look at how deviation took place

Crossing the Red Line

Was it possible for the Muslim society to preserve its noble status for a long time after the death of the Prophet ﷺ or the departure of the direct influence of the Prophet ﷺ on people? We will not be realistic if we answer this question in the positive nor will we be realistic if we say that the departure of the Prophet ﷺ means the downfall of the Muslim society and the destruction of its pillars. In fact, we will neither be realistic nor true believers. We will not be realistic because we will underestimate human existence if we claim that man's belief in values requires a supernatural force to keep it firm. Without such force *faith* will vanish. We will surely underestimate man, discard the reality he lived throughout history believing in values and striving to spread and establish them, and also discard the one thousand years which Islam has lived.

We will not be true believers if we imagine that Allah ﷻ has sent His Messenger with the Qur'an and entrusted him with the task of building a nation on Islamic pillars and explicate issues in the Qur'an just for that specific period of time. It was not at all natural for the edifice of Muslim society to fall apart immediately after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, nor was it natural for the Muslim society to remain holding on to its noble position. It was only natural that the Muslim society should degenerate and lapse one

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

way or another with the removal of the Prophet's ﷺ direct influence, and live within these bounds? But, what are these bounds? They are the bounds created by Islam in the words of Abu Bakr ﷺ: "O people! Whoever used to worship Muhammad, then Muhammad has died now, but whosoever used to worship Allah ﷻ, then Allah ﷻ is immortal." This means that Muhammad ﷺ is immortal, but Islam is not. And the influence of Islam on people is eternal because it forges a direct bond between people's hearts and Allah ﷻ, the Immortal...Thus, people will follow His Words and get into the habit of executing His Commands. Furthermore, the Prophet's ﷺ influence was not limited to a specific period, namely his lifetime. On the contrary, taking him as an exemplary figure and following in his footsteps is still valid as long as people open their hearts to it: people have remained Muslims even after the death of the Prophet ﷺ.

If the *ideal era* of Islam was not destined to last -and it was not according to Allah's ﷻ law of temporality in this universe- then it is at least recorded in the annals of history and stands there as a bright image to inspire the next generations to bring back that *lost* noble status.

It is pure wisdom, as we believe, that a rare and distinctive era such as the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ existed, and followed by fourteen hundred years of light and darkness. It was essential that the Muslim society remains Muslim and spreads Islam in the globe and establishes its pillars for how long after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. This; in fact, historically took place on a large scale

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

and for a long period of time. It is true to say that such period will never reach the status the Muslim society reached during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ and his rightly-guided caliphates, but it was at least higher and nobler than most of the political systems, human values and cultured civilizations on earth.

As Wilfred Smith put it: "...Islam has been the most concerted attempt to make justice prevail among people."

The 'human' values which the Muslims have instilled in the human conscience and which Europe learnt during the Crusades, and in the Islamic Universities in Andalusia and North Africa, can be found on the civilization pillars on which the modern western world is based today. Therefore it is not true to say, as some Muslims claim, that the end of Islam was after the death of the Prophet ﷺ and the Rightly-Guided caliphates. It is true to say, though, that the *ideal and extraordinary period* was over, and an *ordinary period* in Islamic history, though in the eyes of Islam, it was the most distinguished era on earth.

It was then that crossing the red line began, precisely during the Umayyad rule when the first violation of Islamic principles took place both in government and treasury. The Umayyad Ruler introduced his *dictatorial hereditary regime* and a quasi-feudal system began to thrive in the circles of princes and Sultan's followers. Despite all that, the society remained Muslim in its entirety. It was only the capital (administration) which was

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

partly deteriorating for the Sultan and princes both in policy-making and money-management. Yet, the rulers would still insist on implementing Allah's \square Laws in every matter despite their deviation and the decline in the administration. Furthermore, this was a partial decline because it was limited only to the capital. That is why people elsewhere remained within the frame of the concept of Islam, running their day-to-day matters on Islamic principles and spreading the word of Islam on the land. These people were feeling a sense of dignity which Allah \square has bestowed upon Himself, the Prophet \square and true believers. They felt a sense of elation which *faith* creates in the hearts of the true believers. They felt a sense of *great responsibility* which *faith* imposes on them and on society. They felt a sense of real brotherhood which unites the believers. They felt a sense of love and mutual support, a sense of being *one nation*; that is to say, a Muslim travels to any Muslim country and feels he is a brother to every Muslim in that country, regardless of the dispute or differences among the governments or people. These people were convinced that wealth is Allah's \square , that all people have a share in it and that there is no such concept as rich and poor. They felt that their personal conduct should be compliant with Allah's \square Command and that Allah's \square *Shari'a* is the permanent system of life and the *sole* constitution that governs people. They were equally convinced that they should aspire to elevation and ennoblement through knowledge, work and exerting efforts.

After that came the Abbasid era, and the Persians took over in restructuring the state's system of government. Some Western concepts like Sufism,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

abstract philosophical theories were; as a result, introduced into the Islamic thought. Moreover, corruption was rife in the capital. An aura of joy, fun and debauchery reigned the palaces of princes and followers. Verses were composed by poets to add flavour to this atmosphere of joy. In short, the entire capital was plunged into the pursuit of pleasure and corruption.

No doubt, it was only normal that such corruption emanating from the capital would partly affect the Muslim society, but it is wrong to think that Muslims elsewhere were like those –*corrupt people*- in the capital.

History literature, especially Western one, dealt in length with this specific period in the history of Islam and tried to paint this fake image about the entire Muslim society. However, whoever knows life in the capital and life in the rural areas would soon realize the gulf between the two lifestyles, and would realize that the rife corruption in the capital meant nothing for Muslims elsewhere. Muslims elsewhere preserved their Islamic traditions and remained immune to the capital extravaganza

Unlike other historians who record the achievements of Muslim rulers and their successors, our objective is to present the history of the Muslim society, the history of ordinary individuals who constitute the nation and represent the reality of the belief they embrace. And although the capital was rife with corruption, there were in the capital itself scholars deeply engrossed in their research away from the capital's fun, joy, entertainment and downright immoralities. Likewise, geographers were exploring the world to discover

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

the land of Allah ﷻ and record their findings with accuracy and trust, *Du'at* (Muslim preachers) were journeying to spread Islam in the Asian and African continents, and the *Mujahidin* were embroiled in battles against the enemies of Islam.

As for the ordinary Muslim in the city and the countryside, he/she was leading a normal Muslim life in the strictest sense of the word *Muslim*. This does not mean that such society was *ideal*. This has never taken place in history.. even in the society which the Prophet ﷺ raised. It means that it was a society where good triumphed over evil, where the instinct of dignity triumphed over indignity and where noble traditions triumphed over lowly ones. This society (Abbasid) was in general lower than the Umayyad society, but it was a society which lived up to the principles of Islam, with some degree of deviations in these principles here and there.

Then came the Turkish era, when the Othman Turks seized the Muslim leadership. It goes without saying that Turks achieved great victories in history, yet the concepts of Islam came to a standstill or *petrified* under their rule. One of the most distinctive feature of Islam since its birth has been 'action' in every field, be it jurisprudence (*al-Fiqh*), economy, knowledge, society, scientific thought and politics. When the Turks seized power, such action could only be concretized in the fields of conquest and warfare, whilst the rest of the fields were neglected. To illustrate, the Turks were not concerned with knowledge and; hence, Islamic science came to a halt at a

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

time when Europe began to derive the basics of their research from Islamic sciences to prepare the grounds for modern Renaissance. They (Turks) were not original in Jurisprudence; all their fear of Allah \square urged them to do was to preserve the existing Jurisprudence heritage and *freeze* it. Jurisprudence is a continuous expression of a developing society under the Islamic concept. But with the Turks, the freezing of Jurisprudence and the stagnant of the Muslim society converged and; thus, constituted an unprecedented blemish in the history of Islam.

It is true to say that the society preserved its traditions, but such traditions lost their meaning because they were 'ornamental'. Hence, the Turkish *Hijab* was something ornamental; corruption was rife in the palace.

It was then when the real danger began to lurk behind. And there is nothing more dangerous than to stop the development of a system or a concept because such obstruction would mean the beginning of its deterioration and downfall. During all this time, Islam suffered a great deal both inside and outside the capital, namely the conflicts between the ruling dynasties, the Tatars and Mogul attacks, and the successive Crusades. The *halt* marked the onset of a devastating blow to Islam, giving the Crusaders the golden opportunity they had long been waiting to snatch. In fact, they destroyed the Islamic world, for certain, but they did not destroy Islam. It took the Crusaders with all their might, sophisticated weaponry and war tactics one whole century to destroy the Islamic world. It may be said that this was the

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

greatest change the Islamic world had ever undergone: the Muslim society was enormously deteriorated, but Islam or the Islamic world was never on its way to perish.

However, the vigor which Muslims own in their bones, made them rise, like a phoenix from the ashes of the devastating Crusades. Whether the Wahabi movement in *al-Hijaz* (Saudi Arabi) or the Mehdi movement in Sudan, these two movements could have been capable of revitalizing Islam, but the Crusades' might this time was stronger. This time, their objectives was not only to shed blood, but also to distort Islam, hammer its reputation by painting a bad picture of the principles of Islam and implanting it in the hearts and minds of the Muslims to steer them away from Islamic law and creed after they had failed to Christianize (*tansir*) them.[\[16\]](#)

As the Crusaders roamed the Islamic world, deviance in the Muslim society had already taken its toll and Western beliefs had begun to pierce their way through. These beliefs had never invaded the Islamic world whether during its rise or fall. These beliefs called for a separation between religion and society, between religion and economy, between religion and the relationship between the individual and society, between religion and practical conduct in real life, between religion and traditions, between religion and dress, especially female dress, between religion and art, between religion and media, and so on and so forth. In short, these beliefs tried to separate between religion and life or between religion and the state.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

This situation produced the following categories of people. At one camp, there is the male Muslim who would say: "I am Muslim as long as I pray and fast, and I don't have to follow any system on earth other than the Islamic system, and I don't have to follow any traditions other than Muslim ones."

Then, there is the female Muslim who would say: "I am Muslim so long as my intention is good. I should not free mix or go out with boys; I should not buy the latest fashion outfit; I should not wear revealing outfit, and I should not dance in parties, etc..."

At the other camp, there are the so-called male and female Muslims who openly renounced their religion, claiming that religion is a reactionary force which must be reformed in order for the nation to forge ahead in the 21st century.

Such were the fruits of the Crusades' heroic endeavour within two centuries. However, it should be borne in mind that the Crusaders were not alone in this mission. They were assisted by certain materialist trends which called for immorality under the banner of *development*. It was at this point where the biggest deviation in the Islamic world took place. The next chapter discusses the Crusaders' plot against the Islamic world.

Internal Factors

The French expedition (*al-Hamla al-Faransiyya*) to Egypt marked a new and bleak point in Islamic history. Historically, the Crusaders waged several successive attacks on the Islamic world, but every time they did, they were valiantly resisted, however long their stay lasted and however heavy the Muslim losses were. This time when the French attacked Egypt, the Egyptians fought back and forced the French to leave the territory. However, there was something different about this attack compared to previous ones, both in the causes and effects. The bitter defeat which the Egyptians suffered at the hands of Napoleon in northern Cairo was not only a defeat of the army, but also a defeat of one of the Islamic covenants, and the idea that represented such covenant. In fact, it was a deep and overwhelming defeat that undermined the spirit of the Muslims and rocked it to the core. There had been defeats before, and at each one the Muslims would have the consoling answers that defeat was momentary, and would and would often attribute it to the size or sophisticated weaponry of the invader. They heroically sustained the heavy losses, but were confident that Allah's Support was imminent. More to the point, this 'victory-after-defeat cycle' only strengthened their sense of superiority, self-confidence and trust in Allah. For them, the invaders were barbaric, backward, or in short, typical embodiment of immoral values.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

In fact, Al-Maqrizi branded them as unmanly who do not possess a twinge of jealousy for their wives. They are the ones who would allow their spouses to walk with revealing dress. They are the ones who would leave their spouses in the company of their friends without a shred of doubt. This 'laissez-faire' behavior in the Western society was totally unconceivable for the Muslims of that time.[\[17\]](#)

Hence, the sense of superiority dictated by *Aqeeda* and *faith* remained ardent in the souls of the Muslims even during those difficult moments when the Crusaders were piercing through the Muslim lines like stormy water. Despite those critical moments, they were cautious not to let themselves get 'infected' by the contaminated customs and traditions of the enemy.

This was not at all the case after the French conquest. It is true to say that the *Aqeeda* was deeply ingrained in the souls of the Muslims, but such *Aqeeda* under the rule of the Turks was, as stated above, 'stagnant' and lost its long-standing vivacity. It (*Aqeeda*), instead, turned into a set of traditions and 'empty' rituals. Therefore, the defeat of the Muslims in the battle under Napoleon marked an 'inward' defeat...a defeat of *Aqeeda* in the souls. In fact, the Muslims were terrified by the force of the enemy, and concluded that their swords would not hit a single target compared to Napoleon's sophisticated ammunitions. This was the first time the Muslim armies were 'deservedly' defeated by the Crusaders because the latter possessed better ammunitions

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

and better knowledge of art of war which Muslims did not have. The Muslims felt 'defeat' from within.

They could have guarded their souls against this defeat until at least they had gathered momentum as was the case in several previous occasions, but the 'inward asset' of the *Aqeeda* at that time lacked an anchor.

There is no gain in saying that the Egyptian displayed heroic resistance against the French army. There were some breathtaking episodes, the most fascinating of which was the experience of the young boy from *As-Sa'id* (Egyptian region). The boy would sneak every night to the ammunitions storage and steal weapons. When the enemy realized a shortage in their ammunitions, they stepped up security, believing that it was the work of a professional gang. To their surprise, they found out that it was a young boy. The boy was caught, and in resisting his captors, broke his arm. He was taken to the chief officer who, fascinated by the boy's bravery, proposed to adopt him, but the boy refused on the grounds that the chief officer was non-Muslim. The chief then released him on condition that he should not steal again, but the boy refused, claiming that he would not promise anything as long as the enemy was occupying his land. The chief let him go, but advised his men to tighten security over the ammunitions store.

This was an example of 'individual' heroic acts, but the real 'existence' of the fighting Muslim state which would wage wars, equip the army, and resist the

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

invaders in its capacity as 'the state of Islam' evaporated in the battlefield. Muslims felt defeat even as they saw the invaders departing.

The real defeat was not at all the defeat in the battlefield. It was more than that. During the French Occupation of Egypt, Napoleon enacted a new law which he derived from the French law, and ordered that it be adopted by the Muslims in lieu of the existing Islamic law. He also ordered that the Islamic law should only regulate issues of 'personal matters' such as marriage, divorce and inheritance. This was the first time ever the Muslims were governed by a non-Islamic law, enacted and reinforced by non-Muslims!

Historically whenever the Crusaders invaded the Muslim territories, they would remain there for certain years, and would, before the era of Salahuddin, even create small states on the Mediterranean and in Syria. However, they would not dare enact laws to govern the Muslims. In short, every time they invaded the Muslim territory, they would seize plots of land, but they were never a ruling 'state' or power in Muslim land

With Napoleon this time, they were a ruling state in Muslim land after they had subdued the Muslim state and destroyed it in the battlefield. This marked the beginning of real defeat, the defeat of *Aqeedah*

In addition to this defeat, the Egyptians were terrified by the advanced 'Western science' which the invaders brought with them, and also by the systems they created. Subtly, this was the real defeat which paved the way

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

for the Crusaders' destructive goals. Hence, the expulsion of the French from Egypt or their withdrawal was not truly a milestone compared with the defeat they 'imprinted' in the souls of the Muslims

It is worth stopping for a moment and pondering two important points:

- There is, to begin with, the Crusaders, together with the Muslim historians, who tried hard to deny the existence of the 'Crusade' element in the French conquest of Egypt and any subsequent Western Imperialist wars on the Muslim territories. Even worse, and in concealing the Crusaders' 'clear objective', it was claimed that the Crusades were not religious wars. The Crusaders used religion as a guise to conceal their economic goals. Ironically, these claims were regurgitated by Muslims who turned a blind eye on the real objectives of the Crusades and who probably received recompense for keeping 'quiet'!
- Secondly the Crusaders along with the Muslim historians, insisted that the French expedition was a blessing because it woke up the Muslims from the slumber that sealed their spirit, and opened their eyes to 'revival', 'power', 'progress' and 'making use of the instrument of civilisation'.

As for the first claim, we are not in position to refute it because we will stand always accused however strong our refutation may be. In fact, the refutation

of the first claim came from the Christian writers themselves. Rom Landow, for instance, is a modern Christian writer, with a liberal thinking who says in his *The Moroccan Drama (Ma'sat Marrakech)* (p.310): "Two members of the French parliament, Klausterman and Ritzier, said that the French Foreign Minister Mr. Bidou interpreted the events in Marrakech as a battle between the Christian and Muslim forces. When the MPs tried to convince him to put an end to this destructive movement in Marrakech, he said, 'This is a battle between the Crescent and the Cross.'"

As for Europe Crusades, Wilfred Kantol Smith says in his *Islam in Modern History* "Up until the rise of Karl Marx and Communism, the Prophet ﷺ had been (he means Islam, of course) the real challenge to the Western civilisation. It is worth remembering how real and how menacing such challenge was at a certain time."

The attack was direct and fierce in both fields, military and religious, and it goes without saying that for the Muslims, it was the right thing and it was something inevitable for Islam to spread as it had done. However, it was different for those who noticed that the expansion was taking place at their expense. For instance in one go, Christianity lost the best provinces of the Roman Empire. In fact, it was on the verge of losing the entire empire. And despite the fact that the Arab army did not seize Constantinople as was the case with Egypt and Syria, pressure kept mounting on it for a long time. During the second wave of Islamic expansion, Constantinople was captured

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

in 1353, and Vienna was besieged in 1529 in the heart of a 'horrified' Europe. The acute Arab 'syndrome' was taking its toll, and although Czechoslovakia fell under the control of Communism in 1948, it did not strike as much terror in the heart of Europe as the Arab might was doing.

At the same time the ideological war between Islam and Communism was ongoing. The Islamic attack was directed toward the world of theories in an attempt to eliminate the main principle of Christian belief which Europe considered as *the* noble belief upon which it had gradually started to build its civilisation. The Islamic menace was strong, and devastatingly omnipresent and successful in approximately half of the Christian world. Islam was *the* only positive force which managed to snatch from amongst the Christians thousands of people who had hitherto embraced and believed in the new religion.

There is no way that the Westerners –*even those who did not realize they had been involved in such issues*– could have managed to put an end to the elongated main conflict or the 'religious' and bitter war of the Crusades which lasted for two centuries.

Won't those who deliberately turned a blind eye to the reality speak the truth and admit how Europe used to view the Islamic world until this time and what was the real impetus behind such imperialism?

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

It is true to say that the European Imperialism, driven by economic desires, was not confined to the Islamic world only. Rather, it colonized everything on its way, be it in the east or west. This reality; nonetheless, should not divert our attention from the real intention of the Crusaders whose motives were other than just economic. This is evidenced by the fact that they were not concerned just by economic exploitation, but continuously and desperately strove to tear down the pillars of Islam.

To sum up, two important points may be made concerning the Crusades in Egypt. The first point is that the target of the Crusaders in Egypt is now clear, I believe, to the reader: it is the enactment of 'civil' laws for the Muslims in Egypt to adopt in lieu of Islamic Law, and relegation of the latter to 'personal matters' such as marriage, divorce and inheritance. The second point is related to the 'prosperity' brought by the Crusades to Egypt. There are certain myths surrounding such reality inside the Muslim intellectual circles, including modern Muslim 'historians'.

Actually, the 'scientific' movement was the byproduct of the post-defeat 'shock', and the French conquest should not take the credit for that. Europeans may cherish this, but our duty as historians is to take the 'motives' into account. Simply put, was France's aim to 'civilize' and teach Egypt or to kill its personality and 'Frenchise' (make French) as it tried to do in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco and every country it invaded?

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Furthermore, what was the practical outcome of the French expedition for a Muslim Egypt? Was this so-called 'revival' in Egypt based on its natural foundations and real roots? Or was it purely based on 'Christian' grounds to transform Egypt to a country void of Islam or to strip it of Islam Law? Historians ignored historical facts which took place, not those which were expected to happen. Who says that the French conquest was the 'key' to blessing (*al-khayr wa al-baraka*) which should wake up the Muslims from their slumber and reinvigorate them so that the conquest would be perceived of and thought in schools and universities as something positive? Since when in the history of Islam has Allah ﷻ ever abandoned Islam and left it dying without reinvigorating it?

How do such historians view the Wahhabi Movement which rose to cleanse Islam from rotten myth which prevailed in the Muslims' thoughts in the name of Islam? How do such historians view the Mehdi Movement which rose to free the Muslims from the English colonial power which besieged Egypt at the northern river bank, and also from the Turkish power? How do such historians view other movements whose sole objective was to cleanse Islam, struggle against the social, political, intellectual and spiritual injustice Muslims were experiencing, and revitalize Islam so that it serves its purpose in real human life? Or is it that revival is only possible with imperialism, be it French or otherwise? Such, of course, were the effects of the venom which the Crusades placed in the souls of the Muslims

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

In all fairness to historical facts, defeat was real, but that does not mean that Islam perished. In fact, imperialist forces required great efforts to control the Islamic world; it took them one century to subdue the Muslims and another to tear down the pillars of Islam from within; that is, issues of *Aqeeda*. Muslims, in their turn, did not sit with their hands and legs crossed, waiting for miracles to happen. Revolutionary uprisings were staged here and there against the colonial rule both during and after the colonial process. This is indicative of the extent this *Aqeeda's* might and the extent of its resistance despite the destructive tremors it had been experiencing throughout history.

In the next pages, we wish to present the imperialist concerted attempt to annihilate Islam from within, backing our view by citations of reliable missionaries and colonialists themselves

Muhammad Ali was sent as a governor to Egypt by the Turks, concealing independence from the Turkish 'caliphate' in Astana. He was; however, oblivious to the French influence which stalked him in the country. He was oblivious to the fact or probably did not care that France was controlling him. In fact the French were, for his own benefit, setting up and funding construction projects, and assisting him in carrying them out for some goals farther than he had *smartly* planned to achieve behind the 'caliphate'

France was controlled Muhammad Ali and incited him to cede the caliphate, because it was a 'good' example to emulate for the rest of the Islamic world. If it ever happened, the outcome would be the division of the Islamic world

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

into small states. The West would control these states, adopting the 'Reform Movement' as a system, a reform associated in essence with the eradication of Islam, stripping Muslims of their *Aqeeda* and subduing them to the control of the Crusaders who were waiting to seize the opportunity to 'spit the venomous' grudge they had long been harbouring since the defeat at the Battle of Hittin

This was a vague point for the Muslims' thoughts as they presented historical facts: would the 'caliphate' be so corrupt and unjust during its last days? Wasn't it just a glittering generality which concealed behind it myth, ignorance and injustice? Wasn't it so far from the spirit of Islam? Therefore, how could it not be that deflecting from the 'caliphate' was a 'good act' that deserves support and documentation?

Were the Muslims the world over required to adhere to the 'caliphate' given its reduction to a mere bearer of Islamic symbol, while its true reality tasted of humiliation, backwardness and resistance to any reform? Suppose the goals of imperialism to destroy the 'caliphate' and sever the Muslim bonds were malicious. Shall we keep quiet about the wrongs of the 'caliphate' and bury ourselves alive under the rubble of ignorance, backwardness and the like for the simple reason that our deflection from the 'caliphate' will only give the all-clear to the malicious goals?

It was at this junction where the Muslims were confused; a confusion which had been fostered by the imperialist power and which had left them only with

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

two options succumbing to the humiliation of the injustice of the caliphate or deflecting from it and forming independent movements. Whatever the choice, the price to pay for liberating the country from the injustice of the caliphate and the tyranny of the ruling Turks was the settlement of the Western force in the 'independent' state. This is not to mention the imperialist propaganda which only reinforced that confusion in the minds of the Muslims when it persuasively assured them that the imperialist power meant reform, development, and spreading culture and education. All in all, everything the imperialist had brought with him was good, and such goodness was marred by the presence of the caliphate.

However, this was not true: accepting wrongs or severing the bonds with Muslims in this destructive fashion for both Islam and Muslims. It is also untrue that the only road to reform was the conquest of the Muslim land by the Crusaders.

Let us go back to the Wahhabi and Mehdi Movements which the colonial power relentlessly quashed before their (the Movements) power spread across the Islamic world, using directly or indirectly the services of Muhammad Ali and his sons. Both could be summed up in a comprehensive reform movement and both their goals were somehow alike. The Wahhabi's goal was to cleanse the Islamic world of injustice and myth and liberate the Muslims from the yokes of the Turks' ignorance and backwardness. Likewise, the Mehdi's objective was to liberate the northern river bank from the control

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

of the British colonial power, and the Islamic world from the grip of the Turks. Both of them aspired to seeing the Muslims live in a clean Muslim environment and retrieve their glorious history, whilst guarding it against the Western influence.

As a result, the Crusaders rushed to ignite conflicts between the Turk rulers, most of whom were working for the Crusaders, and used Muhammad Ali and his sons to quell the two Movements one after the other. At the same time, the Crusaders encouraged and hailed the rise of any 'independent' movement that was based on regional tribalism and non-Islamic principles.

This was the dividing wall in the Muslims' mind between living in injustice and eliminating this injustice and preserving the unity of the Islamic world and the authority of Islamic *Aqeeda*. And this was the solution the colonial power dreaded at that time, and has been dreading since then.

As for the French colonial power, it continued its expansionist policy in Egypt, Syria and Lebanon. In fact, it had now created a school of 'thought' where it educated in Egypt or elsewhere those who would say that France was their second country and mainland, that Egypt was never part of the East, but part of the Mediterranean (i.e. the one where France is located), that Egypt's intellectual, spiritual and cultural bonds had always been with the Mediterranean states (i.e. not with the Islam which came from the Arab Peninsula, but which should have come from the Mediterranean waters).

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

The French-indoctrinated Egyptians took the command and began transforming the new generations into Anglo-French by steering them away from Islam. France; however, never managed to achieve its long-standing goals which had pushed it to colonize Egypt during Napoleon's conquest. The British colonial ambitions were swifter and surer, for in 1882 the British forces invaded Egypt and remained there for more than seventy years.

It was with the British that the Crusades movement reached its pinnacle, having as its counterparts in the first part of the movement, the French Crusades in Syria, Lebanon, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco; and the Portuguese, Danish, Dutch and Italian Crusades as its counterparts in the last part. It was during this time that the policy carefully drawn up to 'kill' the Islamic *Aqeeda* in the Muslim souls was implemented.

It was not an easy task for the colonial powers. 'Killing' a deep seated *Aqeeda* required a great deal of efforts, and the colonial powers showed great perseverance to reach their goals, and they did. For them, Islam was a reactionary force that must be overthrown in order for mankind to leap forward and jump in the bandwagon of progress. Here are some historical facts, namely statements by missionaries and colonialists:

- In 1882, the British Premier Gladstone, holding a copy of the Glorious Qur'an, addressed members of the parliament in the House of Commons, stressing: "So long as this book is still in the hands of the Egyptians, we will never make it in this country."

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

This is a self-evident reality. The man felt that people derived their power from the Qur'an; that is, Islam, which acted as an obstacle that must be surmounted.

- Then came Dunlop, a graduate with a degree in Theology from a British university to draw the Egyptian education map. Lucky Egyptians! An education system for Egypt set up by a Christian monk! Yes, in order to 'snatch the Qur'an' from the hands of the Egyptians and in order for the colonial power to settle in. Dunlop succeeded in his mission. It was a piecemeal process, but produced the desirable results as was the case with the British policy everywhere.

Al-Azhar was (still is) the source of knowledge in Egypt, for it was both the mosque and the university. It was managed by experts in all fields, who had come not only from Egypt but also from the Islamic world to earn the 'blessing' of being in it or in its vicinity, and to acquire both scientific and religious knowledge. However, *al-Azhar* was not an effective institution for teaching Islam at that time. Like any other institutions toward the end of the Ottoman era (*stagnant era*), *al-Azhar* was just a building worth nothing. In response, there were some earnest endeavours to breathe life into it and turn the darkness that had long enveloped it into a beacon of knowledge.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

And regardless of the results that could have been expected from the reform movement headed by Muhammad Abdu[18] and his followers, the prime concern of imperialism was to destroy *al-Azhar*. Because it was -*at least for the Muslims though this may not have been in reality*- the hotbed of Islamic *Aqeeda* and one of the sources of the Islamic, intellectual, spiritual and realistic 'unity', then it must be removed.

Destroying *al-Azhar* directly or indirectly was not a valid option for the Britons' 'slow' but effective strategy. They would not be *foolish* like the French during Napoleon's conquest when they turned *al-Azhar* into a barn for their horses. They also noticed how untactful the missionaries were when they directly attacked the Islamic *Aqeeda* and how their actions did not produce the desirable effects. The British imperialism was careful enough not to commit the same insanity. Rather, the British resorted to their classical catchphrase ploy: "*slow but sure*." The first thing Dunlop did was to build primary state schools where 'civil' science and English (imperial language) were taught. Successful students would be hired by the British colonial force as clerks in British-run posts and would receive salaries in British sterling.

This was attractive enough! And who would send his son or daughter to *al-Azhar* after this? Only the poor who could not

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

afford the expenses would. Egyptian parents rushed to the offer by sending their children to these schools since the latter would guarantee a job for their children in the government where they would speak the 'language of the colonizer'. Learners in these schools knew nothing about the Qur'an or religion because these two did not find room in the British curriculum. In fact, these learners became a new social 'class', a class which it derived from belonging to well-to-do families, the social status earned from working for the government, and the implicit and explicit support of the colonial force.

Graduates from these schools were not really learners. They were just clerks, trained and enslaved to fearfully execute the commands of the British Ruling Class. This was not the case in mainland Britain, ironically. They would not run their schools in this fashion, imposing coercion and authority, nor were they unaware of the fundamentals of education. This means that the type of educational system set up by Dunlop was not to produce learners but slaves, not to mention the hidden motive which was simmering: turning people away from *al-Azhar* so that it would gradually lose grounds, and then perish.

The teaching approach in those so-called prestigious schools did not encourage learning because it was not creative. In other

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

words, it was a one-way approach which tended to see things from one perspective only, and being so, did not allow learners to see things from different angles and with a critical eye. In contrast, the teaching approach scenario in mainland Britain was different. Critical thinking was part and parcel of the curriculum; whereas in Egypt, the aim was to 'ban' this concept of seeing things from different angles lest it should give birth to the ability to think critically.

In those schools, the principal would create around him an aura of reverence as if he were a god worthy of worship, and such image was created not to encourage learning but to instill fear and surrender in the souls.

In those schools, it was taught that Egypt was an underdeveloped agricultural country which would never be industrial (the mark of progress) because it did not have certain natural resources such as coal and steel. Europe, it was taught, in general, and Britain in particular was a developed country because it was industrial and because it possessed natural resources coal and steel.

These schools had churches where learners would gather and start off their day with Christian supplications. So, for these learners religion was associated with energy, enthusiasm, and vitality in general. In state schools (Egyptian ones), by contrast, the last part

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

of a typical school day was devoted to religious or Qur'anic lessons, but learners found these boring and could not wait to escape from such confinement. Also, the fact that these lessons were delivered by an old and ailing teacher exuded an image of lethargy, temporality and death. Thus, religion was associated in their minds with disability, old-age and temporality.

Dunlop's policy of educational expansion created few secondary schools to support the Crusades wave forward. Similarly, these schools adopted the very curriculum which excluded the reality of Islam, and even if it were the case, this is the kind of Islamic History taught in these schools: the purpose of Islam was to

1. forbid people from worshipping idols and invite them to worship Allah Alone;
2. forbid people from burying their daughters alive and;
3. incite people to spread religion across the globe.

And now that these goals had been achieved, the mission of Islam was over. First, there is no idolatry now. Secondly, people no longer bury their daughters alive. Thirdly, inviting people to Islam or *Jihad* is circumstantial, which means that it does not have a place in this modern world.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

As for Islam as a system of life, as an effective force in real life, as a civilisation that reached all the four corners of the world for more than a thousand years, as a scientific movement which has lit the globe and from which Europe learnt a great deal for to launch their modern renaissance, as an economic system and social justice, as a liberating movement which liberated the individual from the shackles of myth and idolatry, and as a divine law, never found a place in that curriculum. Rather, Islam was taught as the performance of a set of acts of worship or as a set of intellectual, spiritual, social, and political wrongs in order to devalue it in people's minds and to portray it as a reactionary force which must be discarded.

Instead of teaching them the reality of Islam, they taught them that Europe was *the* real force, civilisation, knowledge, social justice, freedom, fraternity and equality, and advancement in every field.

They taught the Muslims that the real social systems came from Europe, the real economic systems were created by the European intellect, and the valid constitutional systems were refined by the Europeans' research. Human rights were cultivated by the French Revolution and Enlightenment, democracy was established by the English, and the pillars of civilisation were erected by the Great Roman Empire.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

In short, Europe was this 'gigantic man'; whereas, Islam was this 'dwarf' which must be kept away from it, in order to survive in Modern Times.

These were not the only items in Dunlop's educational agenda. Because Arabic language was associated in the mind of the Muslims with the Qur'an or with Islam in general, then it must be marginalized and denigrated so that anything linked to it would so be. Another indirect denigration could be represented in the person of the Arabic teacher whose dress and salary were sufficient proof of the subject he was teaching. Whilst, for instance, a teacher of English, maths, history or geography received 12 sterling a month (a 'fat' salary then), an Arabic teacher with the same level of teaching skills received only 4 sterling. Hence, an English teacher would represent respect both at school and in society, and would lead a lavish lifestyle; whereas, an Arabic teacher would represent the other extreme: he would scrape a living and lead a poor lifestyle. The fingers of blame would be pointed to the Arabic teacher; whereas, the English, maths or history teacher would be the best example to emulate. It is important to underline here that the blow was not directed to the Arabic teacher only, but also to Arabic and religion at large.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Imperialism; nevertheless, did not stop here. Just as the Crusades were taking their toll in the Islamic world, the missionaries were doing their best to undermine the Islamic concept and at the same time foster the Christian or European concept inside the Muslims. *La Conquete du Monde Musulman* details some disturbing facts about both the Crusades and missionaries' 'poisonous' ploy which has been destroying the Muslims' Islamic spirit.

It is distressing to read or hear that such ploy was being woven whilst the Muslims were slumbering, having fun and careless of what was going on in front of their eyes. It is also distressing to see traces of such concerted and calculated ploy present in the blood of today's young Muslims; that is to say, their conduct, thought, values and traditions. Some would rejoice at the 'progress' we have attained, whilst others would grieve at the 'corruption' we have been cultivated. At any rate, both poles believe that the 'inevitable progress' is heading toward the Islamic world and that it should not –*and it was not possible for it at any time to-* be foiled. Both groups ignore how imperialism and missionaries 'infested' people's minds and souls with two centuries of indoctrination.

It goes without saying that the universal 'progress' is a huge force, whether we count it as growth or decline, and it was only natural that its 'echo' reached the Islamic world whether we like it or

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

not. This point will be dealt with extensively in the next chapter: *Universal Trends*. However, suffice it to say for the time being that the Crusades undoubtedly endeavoured to 'subdue' the Islamic world to the devastating wave without giving it the opportunity to resist or take a stance, other than submissiveness, toward it.

Were the Islamic world as superior as it was then, it would undoubtedly have a stance toward 'progress' different from submissiveness or joy in rushing to absorb anything from the West believing that it is the cure for every disease, and oblivious to the fact that it is the poison itself. Humanity at large would have an equally different stance, the stance of rescue from falling into the abyss which is wide-open and ready to swallow any goodness that humanity might have cultivated across its long history.

La Conquete du Monde Musulman appeared in a special issue of *La Revue de Monde Musulman*, published in France fifty years ago and aimed to present the activities of the Protestant Missionaries in the Islamic world. A. Le Chatelier, the then editor-in-chief of the *Magazine* would in its preface motivate the Catholics in France by setting as an example the achievements of the Protestant missionaries in this field. The *Magazine* was co-translated by Musaid Al-Yafi and Muhib Eddine Al-Khatib immediately upon its publication and appeared in Arabic in a series of articles in *Al-*

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Mu'ayyed newspaper. Later, the translations were compiled into a book which was published in Cairo in 1350 A.H. (thirty years ago).

The book details the missionaries' activities in approximately one century before its publication, precisely the works of important missionaries' conference held in Cairo in 1906, Edinburgh in 1910 and Lucknow in India. The book gives a clear idea about the tendency of the missionaries, their approach and objective in the Islamic world.

Furthermore, belonging to antiquity has given the book an added value because it explains how the principles which were set in the past were left to take their effect gradually and achieve their objective. In fact, the objectives were reached and they are still effective in the present time. The book also shows to the Muslims that the Crusades' history has been long with them and that the present is just a passing conflict, a conflict which was explicitly termed by Bidou in France as a conflict between 'the crescent and the cross'.

In the Preface to the *Magazine*, Le Chatelier said: "France's undertaking in the East should first and foremost be based on the principles of mind education so that it can expand the scope of such undertaking and ensure its benefit. To attain this goal, the Crusaders ensured that the mission should not be confined to

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

special projects only. Rather, the overall mission should have as its top priority the impregnation of Islamic religion with certain principles derived from the French universities.[\[19\]](#)

In other words, Le Chatelier explicitly expressed in the *Preface* that the 'overall objective' of the Crusades was to indoctrinate Muslim learners with Christian principles which were only possible via education; that is, the French university. The missionaries' knowledge or mission was very limited. Setting up French schools and universities in Islamic world were the only instruments to propagate the Christian principles. These institutions were secular not religious.

Le Chatelier added: "Indeed, the purpose of Christian School (a Preacher School in Beirut) and its programme were different from those of the French College (a secular college) in Astana. However, the results achieved were slightly similar in terms of the principles and beliefs propagated by the French language. We may infer from this that the missionaries, which had huge funds and did their job effectively and wisely, were successful in the Islamic world because they propagated European beliefs."

Le Chatelier quoted Father Zwimer (an active Protestant missionary in the Islamic East, particularly in Egypt, at the end of last century and beginning of this century; also the founder of the British

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

magazine *The Islamic World*) as saying: "The missionaries' goal in the Islamic world is twofold: to build and to destroy; or rather, to dissolve and to solidify. In fact, the missionaries' share in introducing changes to the Islamic principles, beliefs and values in the Turkish land, Egypt and elsewhere was greater than that of the Western civilisation."

This is serious because the statements explicitly expresses that the changes which took place were introduced more by the activities of the missionaries –which were protected by the Crusades- than the Western civilisation itself. This backs our claim which we put forward at the outset in that the universal wave of 'progress' would not have been able to achieve all its destructive goals in the Islamic world had it not been for the support and protection of the Crusades.

Le Chatelier proceeds: "There is no doubt that the Protestant and Catholic missionaries cannot shake the Islamic *Aqeeda* in the Muslims' hearts, and will not unless they do so through the beliefs couched in the European languages. The presence of European languages such as English, German, French and Dutch in the Islamic world makes it possible for Islam to come into contact with European culture and prepares the way for a materialistic Islam. As a result, the missionaries now found it easier to destroy the Islamic

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

notion whose identity and power can only be safeguarded through its dignity and peculiarity."

Likewise, this is a serious tone, and we are led to infer that the purpose of the Crusades' propagation of European languages in the Islamic world is to destroy the Islamic concept. Then, it does not really matter if something is established or not. What really matters most is destruction. Le Chatelier admits: "We should not expect people in the Islamic world to take on other characteristics if they have already given up their social characteristics (derived from the Islamic concept). The gradual weakening of the belief in the Islamic concept and its subsequent decline will, after its expansion in all parts, lead to a decline in the root of religious spirit."

This is a self-evident reality since the purpose of teaching European languages is, as planned by the Crusaders, to weaken the belief in the Islamic concept, and then to deteriorate the religious spirit.

This begs the question: Could we have objected to learning European languages –the only instrument of knowledge at the present time–believing that imperialism uses it to weaken the Islamic *Aqeeda*? It is irrational to refuse to learn a language because it means closing the door of knowledge. However, we should learn it in the fashion we want, not in the fashion contrived by the imperialist. We should learn it as our Muslim ancestors learnt Greek, Persian and Indo, the

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

languages of science then; that is to say, not to the detriment of our *Aqeeda*. Our forefathers learnt such languages to serve science and expand its activities in all fields of knowledge. As a result of this eclectic approach, they became world scientists and researchers without losing their Muslim identity.

It is also important to note that it is absurd to compare between the work of the Crusades in the Islamic world and that of the Muslims in the West. There is no doubt that the Muslims spread the Arabic language in the conquered lands, and that the intention behind their conquest was to spread Islam. Nowhere in historical records would one find that the Muslims strove to strip people of their religious creed or spirit. In fact, inviting people to Islam (*Da'wa*) was explicit and pressure-free.

In his *The Preaching of Islam*, T W Arnold states: "We may infer from the close links between the Christians and Arab Muslims that force was not a decisive factor behind people's conversion to Islam. Muhammad ﷺ himself entered into a treaty with the Christian tribes, and committed himself to protecting and granting their freedom in the exercise of their religious rites. He ﷺ also allowed churchmen to exercise their rights and exert their former influence in peace and security."[\[20\]](#)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

“With the foregoing in mind, namely, the tolerance which Muslims displayed toward the Christians in the first century of *al-Hijra* and continued through subsequent generations, we may conclude that the Christian tribes which embraced Islam did so in their own free will. The co-existence of Arab Christians and Muslims today in some parts of the world is proof enough of this tolerance.”[\[21\]](#)

Furthermore, the dissemination of Arabic in the conquered lands – *which was uniquely a means of acquainting people with the new Aqeeda so that they would freely embrace it* – was not, as Le Chatelier affirmed, at all deteriorating of the religious spirit or corruption of the values, as was the Crusades.

Le Chatelier proceeded in his preface: “Whatever the diversity of views about the results of the Crusades in the second part of their ploy – *pure destruction, deracinating the Islamic creeds was always tied up to the Christian education efforts exerted. The political division which was imposed on Islam would pave the way for European civil works, for Islam would deteriorate from a political aspect and would soon be under the control of a civilisation beset by European ‘barbs’.*”

This short statement comprises two serious realities: The first one is that all the efforts exerted were for the sake of spreading Christian education rather than civilisation which some ignorant Muslims

deemed as a human heritage that knows no religion or nation, or as part of the 'civilisational' activities done by imperialism in the Islamic world. Truly, the imperialist endeavours were to establish Christian education. The second is that the political division which Islam underwent would pave the way for European civil works; that is, European civilisation, as explained by Le Chatelier.

The political division is the breakup of the Islamic world into quasi-autonomous small states ruled by a semi-independent or independence-seeking ruler, and appointed by the Crusaders. Such disintegration was undoubtedly intended to ease and speed up the process of religious and military conquest more than if the Islamic world was one bloc. This also reinforces what we previously reiterated, that European civilisation or 'progress' as 'intellectuals' label it was not capable by itself to corrupt the Islamic world had it not been for the continuous pressure exerted by the Crusaders to uproot the Islamic *Aqeeda* from the souls of the Muslims with whatever means available.

The preface, I believe, is enough to clarify that the evil intention of the Crusaders one century ago was to destroy Islam, and that such evil is still being adopted by the Christian world in its relationship with the Islamic world. The only difference is that the Christians,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

with the exception of Bidou's explicit claims, no longer declare their intentions openly.

There are two reasons for such concealment: First, the evil did work in reality and is still taking effect, so it is better to conceal it until it does its job in peace and quiet, and it is also better not to disturb its course so that it does not go off and wake people up. Secondly, the Crusades found their 'internal' supporters among the Muslims - *whose spirits were colonized and souls poisoned*- who were entrusted with the formidable task of annihilating the Islamic *Aqeeda*. So, they did not *blatantly* enter the Islamic land as they did half a century ago. Rather, they walked in with total freedom because they found their internal supporters in the 'writers', 'intellectuals', 'thinkers', 'liberals' and the like everywhere in the Islamic world who could hold sway on people. All the imperialists had to do was to delegate the tasks to these people, and 'sit back and relax'.

La Conquete du Monde Musulman is divided into chapters entitled as follows: *The History of Missionaries*, *Missionary Cairo Conference of 1906*, *Missionary Edinburgh Conference of 1910*, *German Imperialist Conference*, *Missionary Lucknow Conference of 1911*, and *The Objectives and Hopes of the Missionaries for the Future*. Each chapter contains different details about the missionaries, but I will only

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

draw upon the most significant statements as I did in Le Chatelier's *Preface*.

In the Chapter entitled *Missionary Cairo Conference of 1906* (p.33), it is stated: "The issue of those who received their education in *al-Azhar* was dealt with briefly by the participants in the conference. For instance, one participant talked extensively about the influence of *al-Azhar* in accommodating young students from the four corners of the world. Questioning the secrecy behind the influence of *al-Azhar* for hundreds of years, he said, 'It has been instilled in the minds of the Muslim Sunnis that the teaching approach of Arabic in *al-Azhar* is more effective and better than any other subjects. Graduates from *al-Azhar* are noted for their wide knowledge of religious sciences. Education in *al-Azhar* is open to any Muslim seeking religious education, because it is free, and because *al-Azhar* is capable of paying the salaries of 250 teachers. He also wondered whether or not *al-Azhar* posed a threat to the Church. He proposed that a Christian college be established and funded by the Church. This college, he emphasized, should involve all the churches of the world whatever their belief in order to rival *al-Azhar*. The college would offer professional Arabic language courses instructed by highly qualified teachers.

He concluded: "Perhaps it is the divine intervention which invited us to choose Egypt as the center of our activities. So, let us begin Christianizing the Islamic kingdoms!"

So, *al-Azhar* posed a threat to the Church and it should be removed from the way! But, how can a one-thousand year old religious edifice (*al-Azhar*) be removed from the scene? It is its 'uniqueness' for more than one thousand years which can be removed. If it has a rival, then its value will vanish into thin air, and people will thus try something new.

"When the issue of medical missionaries was brought up at the conference, Mr. Harper stated that the number of medical missionaries should be increased because the medical team would often live amongst and mingle with the populace, and would thus exert great influence on the Muslims than other missionaries." (p.36)

"A doctor in the medical team should not for a moment forget that he is first a missionary, then a doctor." (p.37)

"The first achievement of the missionaries was the Christianization of a handful of youth, and the second was getting all the Muslim classes used to gradually adopting the Christian ideas and beliefs." (p.48)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

“The missionaries should not despair if they notice that the results are weak, for it is a fact that a strong tendency toward European sciences and women’s liberation had been nestled in the hearts of the Muslims.” (p.47)

It is worth mentioning here that the missionaries at that time (in 1906), had already stopped *literally* Christianizing the Muslims, and were content with getting all the Muslim classes used to gradually adopting the Christian ideas and beliefs or veering toward ‘European sciences.’ For priest Zwimer, Christianizing the Muslims intellectually and spiritually was more important than Christianizing them for the sake of becoming Christians officially. And the Crusades undoubtedly managed to achieve this.

“The Cairo conference also discussed the issue of the reform movement which was directed towards the Muslims in India by referring to its ringleader Ahmad Khan and his Islamic school in Aligarh and the Islamic education conference. In his presentation entitled *The New Islam*, priest Whitbercht stressed that Europe’s principles bring Muslims closer to Christianity.” (p.52)

The crusaders were more concerned with singling out every deviant creed or person amongst the Muslims and revering it or him. As mentioned on page 46 of the book: “Galvanizing the Muslims should

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

be via a messenger from amongst themselves, because the tree must be cut down by one of its branches.”

“Some missionaries said: ‘Schools are the best mediums of propagating the Christian faith.’” (p.60)

“The government (i.e. the German government which rules the crusader (Muslim) states in Africa) had to educate the Muslim nationals in secular schools so long as those Muslims skipped the Christian schools.” (p.82)

“Ambassadors of big states in the Turkish capital Constantinople (now Istanbul) agreed that the secondary education schools founded by the Europeans had an impact on resolving the issue of the Orient, and such impact would not have been possible without the joint efforts of the entire European states.” (p.72)

The ‘issue of the Orient’ was a newly coined word in the Western literature dedicated to writing the history of the last part of the Othman Empire. ‘Resolving’ means, according to them, the ousting of the Caliphate which was –*despite its shortcomings*- a token of the Islamic world unity, and a threat to Europe despite the weakness it underwent. So much so that it was dubbed ‘the sick man’. Despite all that this ‘sick man’ continued to frighten, disturb and stress them out until they (Europeans) finally destroyed ‘him’ in the First World

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

War with the aid of their sly ally Mustapha Kamal (Ataturk). For the crusaders, Ataturk was a hero, because of the great services he paid to the crusaders, notably the disintegration of the unity of the Islamic world and the establishment of a weak state in Turkey on a non-religious basis which the crusaders still take pride in.

In these statements, the author of the book admits that secular schools played a more crucial role in resolving the 'Orient issue'; that is to say, in destroying Islam, than politics or military force. In fact, these are the types of schools we would welcome with open arms and where we would proudly send our children to.

Chapter: Edinburgh Conference, 1910

"The works of Edinburgh Conference were more than just ink on paper, for the German Imperialist conference which followed the Edinburgh missionary conference was so much concerned with the German missionaries to the extent that this imperialist political conference turned into a religious missionary conference." (p.64)

"The Swiss magazine published an important article on the position of the missionaries at the German Missionary Conference by A.K. Kesinfield who was the author of the report on Islam Section at the Conference and also the secretary of the Missionary Association in Berlin. The article says: 'The Missionary Conference had two

distinctive features: the first, it dealt with industrial and economic issues, and the second, its consensus to attach the political and economic goals to the moral and religious activities in the German imperialist policy.' Kesinfield supported his claim by quoting a statement made by Shinkel, the head of the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce: 'The growth of imperialist wealth depends on the importance of the men who go to the (crusader states) colonies. The most important means to attain this goal is to propagate the Christian faith in the crusader states, because it is the essential requirement to attain our objective, even though from an economic aspect.' The missionaries and members of the Conference argued about their conception of Islam, and Kesinfield pointed to the Islamic danger in the German crusader states in Africa, proposing that the Conference be concerned with all aspects of the mission, be it religious, intellectual or political.'" (p.80)

This is sufficient to indicate the strong link between imperialism and the missionaries, and the importance of annihilating the Islamic *Aqeeda* to the imperialists, even from a pure economic aspect which the Crusaders, along with the ignorant among the Muslims, profess to be the impetus behind conquering the Islamic world.

Chapter: Lucknow Conference, 1911

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

"There are now only 37,128 800 Muslims under Islamic governments; the central political power was now transferred from the Islamic Caliphate to England, France, Russia and Holland. The number of Muslims under each power exceeded that of Muslims in all parts of the Othoman Sultanate. Moreover, the number of Muslims under Christian states will increase more during imminent coup-d'états, thereby increasing the responsibilities of Christian kings in Christianizing the Islamic world." (p.94)

As for the issue of women as a target in the agenda of the mission, it was hinted at in the extract above which says: "The missionaries should not despair if they notice that the results are weak, for it is a fact that a strong tendency toward European sciences and women's liberation had been nestled in the hearts of the Muslims." (p.47)

However, more details on the issue are mentioned in the resolutions passed at Lucknow and Cairo conferences (pp.88-98):

"All these events (the initiatives to establish a renaissance in the Islamic world) forced the Church to work hard and consider the issue of mission and missionaries. Therefore, the Lucknow Conference program comprised the following:

1. Studying the current situation;

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

2. Expanding the training of missionaries and women education;
3. Preparing and increasing the necessary logistics.

These are some of the items in the agenda of the Conference. As for the program itself, it was presented to the members, and among the items it comprises (our concern) are:

7. Social and psychological elevation amongst Muslims women.
8. Women's activities."

What a special concern and attention is the Muslim woman suddenly getting? Social and psychological elevation of Muslims women? And who is offering such attention? The missionaries! And when? When there is a danger of establishing a renaissance in the Islamic world, and when the requirement is taking decisions against such renaissance?

What is this great concern? And what is the relationship between educating, elevating women socially and psychologically, and the resolutions passed to attack and kill Islam before it rises again?

Does not that require attention? Doesn't that conceal something? Indeed! 'The Emancipation of Muslim Women' was the most 'rotten' movement pioneered by the Mission to break up and uproot

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

the Islamic edifice. Such movement would suffice to 'infest' the Muslims with immoralities and intellectual rot more than would any other means combined. When a woman goes out indecently dressed, and indirectly/directly seduces or arouses men sexually, then there is no Islam, no religion, no *Aqeeda* or coherence in people's moral values. It is then when the missionaries seized the opportunity to give the final blow.

Some, especially the ignorant amongst the Muslims, would think that the undertaking was intentionally good since the situation of the Muslim women required such intervention and revolutionary movement to take them out from their backwardness, low status and the like, and place them in a status which is higher, socially, politically and psychologically.

The missionaries' goals; nevertheless, were not as such toward the Muslim women or the Muslim society at large. The missionaries themselves admitted that their overall goal was to break up the Islamic edifice, corrupt its values and 'melt' the factors of strength and turn them into factors of weakness. Therefore, when the missionaries 'liberated' women, they did not do so to elevate society to a higher status, but they did so to corrupt them (women) in the first place, and society secondly. And when the missionaries were 'teaching' women, they were teaching them the real meaning of corruption so that they would become experts in

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

corruption and teach it themselves to their children and society. The missionaries' objective was to make this corruption based on 'principles'; sometimes educational, sometimes psychological, sometimes social and intellectual but corruption in every aspect. Furthermore, when the missionaries elevated the woman 'socially and psychologically', they meant plunging her into the abyss of temptation and keeping her there forever. And they managed to do so.

This 'manifesto' which calls for liberation education, and social and psychological promotion are all parts of the objectives of Islam concerning the Muslim women, but they are not based on the decline of moral and religious values to which the colonizers aspire to in order to annihilate Islam. In other words, Islam already places the woman on a higher status, but safeguards her chastity, and thereby, the chastity of society.[\[22\]](#)

I have already dealt with the situation of the woman in Islam in other works, but I would like to emphasise here in relation to the crusades in the Islamic world that the issue of the woman and her emancipation was one of the greatest social *fitna* (trial) which the crusaders created to break up the Islamic world.

In addition to these missionary endeavours, the Orientalists, too, played their role with *sincerity* when they stirred the biggest intellectual *fitna* among

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

'intellectuals' in the Islamic world. Such *fitna* prepared the grounds for the teaching methodology in primary and secondary schools, then universities.

Whilst the missionaries, according to their literature, targeted people from all walks of life, the Orientalists targeted the 'elite', for they are the ones who understand and get affected by the intellectual, philosophical, legislative, social and economic 'issues' raised by the Orientalists against Islam. In fact, the elite have been injected before by 'the precepts' of these poisons in schools and universities. More to the point, these 'elect' people are more responsive and can be entrusted with the task of handing down these poisons to subsequent generations via their books, magazines, schools and colleges, homes and clubs. The fruit of their work will be a generation that knows only vague issues about Islam.

In my *Shubuhāt Hawl al-Islām*, I discussed several unclear issues which the Orientalists raised concerning Islam and which Communists inherited and introduced some economic aspects to it, something which the Western Orientalists never gave attention to. For example, the Communists introduced the concepts of individual property, Feudalism and Capitalism, and so on and so forth. I did not discuss in the said book unclear issues about *Aqeeda*, Divine Revelation and the truth about *an-Nubuwwa* (Prophethood) which made up the biggest part in the Orientalists' concerns. I, instead, dealt with the issue of Islam as a real example that lives in society and regulates the relationships between members of society, rather than a 'theoretical belief'

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

which preoccupies the mind more than life. This is because I *always* feel that the debates of the Orientalists on 'Aqeeda', 'Divine Revelation' and 'Prophethood' were not worth debating. For instance, Mirgilioth, a leading Orientalist figure, has 'notable' students in the Islamic world who support his claims and call for his beliefs concerning Pre-Islamic poetry (*Ash-Shi'r Al-Jahili*) and the Qur'an. He said in his *Universal History of the World*: "Muhammad had an unknown pedigree because his name was Muhmmad Ibn Abdullah, and Ibn Abdullah was a name which Arabs gave to anyone whose pedigree was unknown. So, Muhammad was of unknown lineage within an ignorant milieu which did not know or take pride in lineages. He, unknown as he was, managed to hold sway on people's minds by influencing them, and challenging their gods, traditions, rituals, and so on and so forth. What a 'ridiculous' and worthless subject for debate? It is not the time and place here to refute the claims or elaborate on this any further, but I will take some quotations from *Islam 'ala Muftaraq at-Turuq* (*Islam at the Crossroads*) authored by Leo Boldface (Muhammad Asad) and translated by Omar Farroukh: "After some decades, there came a time when Western scholars began studying foreign cultures and facing them with certain leniency. However as for Islam, the traditional degradation began creeping in the form of an unreasonable confederation into their scientific research. The chasm opened up by history between Europe and the Islamic world has no bridge. Degrading Islam has become a significant part in the European thought. In reality, early Orientalists in modern eras were Christian missionaries working on Islamic lands, and the distorted image they painted about the teachings

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

and history of Islam was intended to influence the Europeans' stance toward the 'idolaters' (i.e. the Muslims). However, such brain twisting continued despite the fact that Orientalist sciences had been liberated from the influence of Mission. Therefore, these Orientalist sciences have no excuses to have a religious protection that is misleading. As for the war of Orientalists on Islam, it is a genetic and natural predisposition which emerged from the aftermath of the Crusades, and launched its tentacles in the minds of early Europeans." (pp.58-59)

It goes without saying that the Orientalists made great contributions to Islamic research. Their approach was, ironically, more methodological than Arabs in trying to understand and interpret Arabic texts and events. In fact, they delved into the depths of Arabic language and literature and managed *-despite their errors-* to understand texts and interpret events better than the Arabs who are supposed to be the authorities and defenders of Arabic language.

All these rare tributes and great efforts in retrieving and publishing ancient Arabic text despite their ridiculous, at times stupid, mistakes in comprehension and interpretation, should be recorded or added to the Orientalists' merits. However, what is important is not the efforts, but the objective for which such efforts have been exerted: Was it to serve or to destroy Islam? Was the Orientalist in his endeavours goaded by a 'scholastic spirit' or a 'missionary spirit'?

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Where is the 'scholastic spirit' in Mergelioth who cast doubts on the Prophet's ﷺ lineage in the Arab Peninsula where preserving lineages was a sacred 'duty' dictated by the milieu and traditions? Where is the 'scholastic spirit' in Gronibaw who stated in his *Al-Islam* that knowledge was, according to Islam, a prerequisite to serve religion; that is, issues of life after death. At the same time, he affirmed in the same book that Islam is both a system for this life and the Hereafter, where you cannot separate religion from life, or society from *Ash-Shari'a*.

Where is the 'scholastic spirit' in Felhuzon who stated in his *The Arabic State* that Abu Bakr ﷺ and Omar ﷺ usurped the Caliphate from the Muslims? Probably, it would be more interesting or debatable if he had said that it was usurped from Ali ﷺ. He also said that Muhammad ﷺ entered into a truce with the Jews because of his weak position, but when he gathered momentum, he expelled them in the name of nationalism. Fekhuzon completely forgot what history says: It was the Jews who broke their covenant with the Muslims, formed an alliance with the Polytheists in Makka and the hypocrites in Madina, and assaulted a Muslim woman.

Where is the 'scholastic spirit' in Goldsteir who wrote in his *Al-Aqeeda wa Shari'a in Islam* that there is nothing new in Islam, whether in ideas or in man's relationship with what goes beyond his intelligence. In fact in its development, Islam is being adorned with Hellenistic beliefs, its precise jurisprudence is derived from Roman law, its political system is influenced

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

by Persian political theories, and its Sufism represents the new Indian and Platonic notions.

Where is the 'scholastic spirit' in Cain Rabin's (Mergilioth's student) book, *The Ancient Languages in North West and South West of the Arab World* in which he said: "The Qur'an contains many grammatical and lexical errors, and that Muslims for generations have been correcting most of them, while some of them still exist today.

Despite all this, Orientalists in the Islamic East still have many admirers and students!

What is worse is when some upright Muslims obviously draw upon Orientalist literature, adopting it as a reference not for doing research on historical events, but on the origin of Islamic concept and interpretation of Islamic history. They do so without realizing that the prime concern of the Orientalists, be it open or concealed, was to cast doubts on the *Aqeeda* and put streaks of falsehood on the concept of Islam, and tarnish the image of exemplary Muslim figures who founded this religion

If the *fitna* has reached this point for those 'intellectual' Muslims, what would this *fitna* be like for those intellectuals who do not know anything about Islam except the information they receive from the Orientalists? What would this *fitna* be like for the irreligious people whose appetite is satiated

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

only when Islam is being slurred and distorted, or whose hearts ache when misconceptions about Islam are dispelled? Allah ﷻ says in this context:

ﷻ When Allah, the one and only, is mentioned, the hearts of those who believe not in the Hereafter are filled with disgust and horror; but When (gods) other than He are mentioned, behold, they are filled with joy! ﷻ (Az Zumar:45)

Indeed, the Orientalists' efforts were part of this concerted ploy to destroy Islam. You might realize from the outset of the battle that the open attack on the Muslims' *Aqeeda* had only one result which was: provoking Muslims and alerting them to this concerted ploy. This; nevertheless, only strengthened the Muslims' faithful adherence to this religion. This time, the Orientalists changed tactics by 'slipping poison into honey'. Instead of attacking Islam, they praised and ennobled its teachings. When the Muslims started to feel that the environment is friendly and secure, and called off their alert, the Orientalists began to 'slip' the streaks of distortions and falsehood which eventually caused people to doubt their *Aqeeda*.

Hence, such was the knavish trick. How come certain Muslims were not able to spot the Orientalists' evil intentions and suspect a Christian author who does not believe in Islam, and yet praises Islam? This is because they were blind until Allah ﷻ sent them that 'impartial scholar' to expose the falsehood of Orientalists and show them the truths in the light of knowledge which is always impartial.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Ask some of these Muslims the following questions: How could you expect a non-Muslim to tell you the truth about Islam, and how could you adopt him as reference in understanding your Islamic religious matters? Their response will be: It is true he does not believe in Islam, but he conducts a free 'empirical' research that has nothing to do with religion!

It is good to adopt the Orientalists' efficient and practical research methodology, though we are more capable than them in understanding and interpreting texts, explicating events and their weights, and assessing personalities and placing them in their right position. However, relying on them to understand our religion is a disaster.

Before me now one of the most 'rotten' books by the Orientalists I have ever read, *Islam in Modern History*. It is designedly written to praise Islam, but 'slips' the rotten ideas in this praise. The 'rot' lies in the fact that it confirms such truths that you would never conceive that a Western Christian author would confirm such truths. This will ensure an aura of 'trust' and perfect scientific impartiality which is beyond doubt and misinterpretation.

"Europe cannot forget the crusades and the constant threat of Islam on its territory for centuries."

"The West, influenced by the old antagonism between Christianity and Islam, allied with Zionism against Muslim Arabs." (p.111)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

“The West directs all its weapons: military, scientific, ideological, social and economic, and so on and so forth to the Islamic world with the aim of humiliating and denigrating it.” (pp 104-113)

“Comparing both Christian and Islamic creeds in terms of ‘sacrifice’, the Christian creed has a negative attitude toward the events of history. In contrast, Islam is positive, even when it comes to sacrifice. Whilst the Christian would sacrifice self by standing in the face of the devious course of history until it ‘runs him down’, the Muslim sacrifices self in the knowledge that such sacrifice will push the course of history forward in the right direction.” (Chapter One)

“Do you still suspect what a Western Christian man says to you after all his good intentions? Do you still suspect such man when he says that Turkey which built its state on a non-religious (secular) base is purely Muslim? More to the point, do you still suspect such man when he explains to you that Turkey simply gives Islam a new interpretation which separates between religion and the state, between religion and society, between religion and traditions, between religion and economy, between religion and legislation, between religion and the reality of life, and so on and so forth?” (Chapter Four)

“Do you still suspect a Western Christian man when he says to you that Turkey is the exemplary state which all Muslims should emulate in order to gather momentum like Turkey, acquire knowledge and make progress?”

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

(Ironically, Turkey is now weak, poor and undignified, or, to be blunt, in a mess)

“Do you still suspect a Western Christian man when he says to you that Pakistan is a failure because it was built on religious principles, and that is a bad example for Muslims to follow?” (Chapter Five) (This is a contradiction because he himself stated on page 225 of the same chapter that Pakistan failed because the ruling party was not based on a religious spirit or on a real understanding of Islam. In fact, it was the party which the British Imperialism educated and brought closer to it.)

“Do you still suspect a Western Christian man when he says to you after so much ‘beating around the bush’ that Muslims today should, in order to survive in this modern world, relinquish the main belief in their *Aqeeda* which is: Islam cannot be established except in a Muslim society. They should instead live as Muslims (in terms of *Aqeeda*) in a society that is not based on Islamic precepts.” (Hence, this was the primary objective of the Orientalists’ activities as it was also that of the missionaries)

These are the crusades against Islam in its modern era. In his *Islam in Modern History*, Wilfred Kantol Smith stated -after citing the history of the antagonism between Christianity and Islam: “We are not trying to rewrite the long history of conflict in order to rekindle such conflict or justify this abuse in any way, but to stress that those who strive for understanding between the two poles should not expect immediate success.” (p.111)

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

To borrow Wilfred's words, we are not drawing upon history for the sake of stirring grudges. On the contrary, our aim is to know where Islam has come from and how, and what the West has gained from this conflict.

The fruit of this conflict is the 'Muslim' generations which only know Islam by its name or know Islam as a set of gestures or acts of worship made by a Muslim person here and there. Put differently, the fruit of the conflict is that Muslim person who says: "I am a Muslim as long as I pray and fast...and there is no harm if I adopt my ideas, traditions, values, social or economic system from any non-Muslim system." The fruit is also that Muslim woman who says: "I am Muslim so long as my intentions are good, and this should not interfere with how I dress or with what I do; for instance, I am free to go out or mix with men, be they Muslim or non-Muslim."

The crusaders; nevertheless, were not alone in responsible for the distortion and thus disintegration of the Islamic *Aqeeda*. Other trends were involved and were designedly set up to deracinate the *Aqeeda*. These trends were universal because they were not confined to the Islamic world only, but extended to the entire world.

Universal Trends

When these trends 'invaded' the Islamic world and began to exert their influence on Islam, the Islamic world had already been conquered, and its doors wide open. These trends do not go against Islam only, but also against any faith, whatever its nature. In Europe; for example, the status-quo made the emergence of these trends seem natural and logical. In other words, the emergence was gradual and smooth. In the Islamic world; however, these trends were an 'intrusion' because they were not the product of circumstances. Thus, they were unnatural and illogical.

Despite the fact that the Islamic world was free, strong and united, there was no doubt that such trends would somehow shake its edifice or change some of its concepts. Now that the Islamic world is weak, and still wearing the fetters of imperialism, it is more vulnerable and susceptible to the conquest of these trends.

This 'development' which Europe so calls was not inevitable as people (in Europe) imagine. They imagined it as inevitable because theirs, as stated above, was natural and logical; that is to say, dictated by circumstances. Even in Europe, these trends should not have been inevitable even in those circumstances had Europe believed in other values to buck these developing trends. So, Europe did not wish, and hence the trends were inevitable.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

□ Verily never will Allah change the condition of a people until they change it themselves. □ (Ar-Ra'd:11)

At any rate, such development was not something really inevitable in any part of the world, particularly in Islam. This is not the first time in history that Islam has challenged the entire world with something other than what such world believes in, and then takes its own way with its own values and principles, and leaving the world with its beliefs, then influences this world by imposing its (Islamic) concepts, values and principles, and tries to put it back to track.

When Islam appeared, it found people already worshipping kings, rulers, superiors, fire and stones as gods. So, was the political concept imposed on Islam because the entire world was Muslim? Or, did Islam come to teach rulers to say: "Listen and obey as long as I obey Allah's □ Command in ruling you, but if I disobey Allah □, then you are not obliged to obey me." "If I behave appropriately, assist me, but if I abuse power, then correct me," thus turning such guided nation into a 'watchdog' over the nation and ruler's actions.

When Islam came, the world had already been plunged into corruption, moral or otherwise. So, was this moral concept (which was perhaps developed!) imposed on the Muslim society to corrupt and denigrate it? Or, had this society –*despite the corruption it underwent*– been the purest society on earth until the Christian Mission came to corrupt it for two centuries?

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

When Islam came, it was the law of the jungle which had been predominating: the strong kills the poor...was this dehumanising concept (which Europe was 'elevated to' in its modern renaissance) imposed on Islam? Or, did Islam come to establish the principle of cooperation between the capable and the incapable in society, and keep implementing it for more than one thousand year?

Developments are inevitable only when man abandons his positive existence and surrenders himself to the course of events which will –*as long as there is no resistance from man*- keep 'sweeping' him until the tide of events recede.

Developments are also inevitable when man is not strong enough to confront the tide. Hence, the Islamic world was so weak when the crusaders were ruling and controlling it everywhere.

It goes without saying that the crusaders 'whispered' to the Islamic world that such development was both an inevitable and excellent thing. They did so that the handful of people left with the true *Aqeeda* would not rush to resist this rising destructive trend. The crusaders also tried to nurture this trend in the minds of people by 'whispering' to the Islamic world that resistance to this development was a reactionary force, decline and stagnation. Who would want to attach the 'tag' of backwardness and stagnation to himself? Isn't it the ideal moment for man to 'jump on the bandwagon', secure for himself the status of 'good reputation, development and progress', and dismiss the accusations of backwardness leveled against him.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

This reminds me of a story which took place few years ago. There was this girl who still possessed 'some shyness', the natural shyness of a girl, though she was in her swimsuit. She knelt on the sand and asked a photographer for a snapshot. The photographer suggested that the picture would look better if she sits down with her legs open, but she refused. He then said to her, 'are you a peasant?' That remaining portion of shyness in her receded, and she eventually accepted his suggestion.

This is how the crusaders would deal with the weak among the Muslims: are you reactionary? Questions such as this one would undermine the Muslims' spirit and; as a result, their fervent resistance receded. It was in this fashion that the European 'civilisation' forged its 'inevitable' way in Islamic world which was stripped of its mind, will and management.

'Industrialization', for example, was an excellent universal development in many of its aspects. Did the crusades allow it to enter the Islamic world and establish itself in all its corners, or did they prevent it (industrialization) from entering it at all in order to keep the Islamic world in a backward state, industrially and economically, and in order to serve their purpose? On the contrary, the crusaders kept the door wide open for religious and moral corruption under the name of development, because this would serve its purpose of denigrating the values of the Islamic *Umma* and destroying its edifice, and at the same time depriving it of the means of power and success, though it were an inevitable worldwide development.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

This one example may clarify many confused issues in the mind of Muslims as they ponder concepts such as 'development', 'inevitability', and so on and so forth

Now, what are these 'universal trends' which the crusaders pushed through the doors of the Islamic world and deprived the Muslims of the tools of resisting such trends?

It is not an easy task to put two centuries of development in a nutshell. I explained in *Maarakat at-Ta'alid*, Chapter, *Jawla Ma'a at-Tarikh* how the state of affairs in Europe was at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. I also explained how Europeans moved from a people with religion-based traditions –*whatever the religion, however religious and however rigid such traditions were*- to a people without *Aqeeda*, values and traditions, living in a purely materialistic pagan world, free and indulged in pleasures.

I further pointed out that Darwin, the pioneer of *Evolutionary Theory*, played a pivotal role in such development. His *The Origin of Species* published in 1859 and *The Origin of Man* in 1871 shook man's beliefs and set them on the road to a prolonged controversy. Religiously, man is a distinguished being, with a soul which distinguishes him from animals. Such reality gave birth to spiritual, moral, religious and intellectual values which do not exist in the world of animals. Regardless of people's adherence to these values, the latter existed anyway, yet Darwin came and put forward his claim that man is a developed animal, and that's it. It is a pure animal...Allah ﷻ, he

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

claimed, did not breathe life into him, and no supernatural force did interfere with his creation...Man is the end of animal development, and is better than animal only in what he has managed to acquire during its slow process of development within millions of years.

The theory sparked a fierce conflict between Darwin and the Church over man: the Church branded Darwin as a pagan, and Darwin accused the Church of nurturing ignorance and propagating falsehood. At first, the public supported the Church because it was deeply hurt by Darwin's theory which reduced man to animal, but later lost faith in the Church, made a U-turn and supported Darwin.

During the middle ages, the Church transformed from a token of mercy and spirituality to a worldly oppressive despot by imposing on people some financial, spiritual and intellectual fees. For instance, it levied heavy taxes, imposed unpaid work in church, and required people to show total submissiveness to religious men. Furthermore, the Church imposed certain ideas, professing that they were heavenly, and that anyone who violated them would be accused of blasphemy.

Hence, the oppressed and humiliated public found it an opportunity to take revenge on the Church by supporting Darwin's theory though it 'dehumanized man'. This fury translated itself not only to the attack on the Church, but also to the annihilation of religion. As a result, Europe turned into a pure materialist pagan world that materialises itself in the economical,

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

political, religious, ethical and traditional aspects. One of the results of this drastic change was the emergence of trends such as the materialist interpretation of history and sexual interpretation of human behavior were, both of which were an extension of the Darwinian concept of humankind. [23] The materialist interpretation of history interprets the entire life in materialist terms: the history of humanity is a history of the quest for food. It is the materialist forces which govern human life and give it ideas and beliefs. Ideas, emotions and beliefs are not self-values, and are not the ones which move people or set up their practical conduct in real life. In fact these Ideas, emotions and beliefs follow and are linked to the economic and materialist 'development'. There are no fixed values known as religion, values and traditions. There is absolutely nothing fixed. Every epoch has its own peculiar concepts and values which may be appropriate for it, but inappropriate for others.

Religion, values and traditions were born out of feudalism, but the industrial epoch has no religion, values or traditions. In other words, it was a liberal era governed by the machine. It created new concepts and new 'values'. Religion could not find a room in these concepts, because humanity no longer needed religious myths in an era of science and industry. It now lived in a concrete world. Any metaphysical concepts beyond human perception and do not fit with the 'growth' of humanity and its development became history.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

As for the sexual interpretation of human behavior, this trend ascribes any human activity to sex. A baby breastfeeds with a sexual pleasure, urinates with a sexual pleasure, sucks his thumb with a sexual pleasure, and feels certain sexual inclination towards his mother. If the 'father' acts as an obstacle between this sexuality, the Oedipus Complex is triggered. It is from this repressive drive (*al-kubt*) that 'morals' emerge. Religion, values, traditions and conscience are born. However, the sex factor remains the impetus behind all these, and being so, it largely affects man's psychological state. In response, this repressive drive should be challenged in order to release humanity and push it forward. These two concepts (materialist interpretation of history and sexual human behavior) constitute the basis of modern 'development' in Europe. purely animalistic. This is no coincidence since 'man' was, in Darwin's view, a developed animal. More to the point, these materialist and animalistic concepts fit in well with this animalistic man which Darwin initiated in history.

It was in this fashion that Europe steeped low. It 'waged' a war on spiritual, religious and moral values in every aspect of life. For it, the entire life is a matter and a pleasure haven for animal. From this standpoint if religion, values and traditions are all 'hurdles' that stand in the way of animal's pleasure, then they should be uncompromisingly overcome. In order to attain this goal, we should adopt all theories and experiments of 'science', and certain 'scientific' theories should be put forward 'designedly' to assert that religion is a myth, values harm humans, and traditions are 'worn-out' and

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

bound to die out with the fierce next generation. There should be also other theories which say that sex is a 'biological' act that has nothing to do with values; every young boy and girl 'should' have sexual intercourse as much as they have food until they are satisfied and their tension is eased, so that they can be productive members in society

These concepts were rampant in Europe which convincingly solaces itself with the fact that this is *the* 'development', something 'inevitable' and unchallenged. Only those backward, reactionary, and unintelligent people would stand in its way. 'Parrots' in the East reiterated the same thing without asking themselves the following questions: Is this true? Is this suitable for life in the East whilst suitable in the West? Is this going to work in this (East) environment as it did in the Western environment?

No question was asked because people in the East were 'colonized' or 'enslaved' in their conscience, and since when slaves question or argue with their masters? Could Europe err? Could masters err? Could slaves know better than their masters? Of course not! Anything is arguable, disputable and discussable except the imported ideas and concepts from the West

Isn't it the West which possesses technology, but we don't? Is it the West which possesses science, but we don't? Isn't it the West which possesses almost everything, but we don't? Is it the West which possesses us, but we don't? If the West says to us don't follow any religion then we should obey. If the West says to us don't have any values then we should obey. If the West

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

says to us don't follow any tradition then we should obey. If the West says to us do as the West does; that is, courting, dating, and so on and so forth to ease our tension instead of exerting your efforts in repressed sex, then we should do. It was against this background that the West sat back and began to rub its hands together in satisfaction with the 'slaves' execution of the master's commands.

Indeed, enveloped in its animalistic cloak, Europe does believe in this debasement, convinced that it is development, progress and elevation. It; nevertheless, still possesses real virtues such as 'work', 'productivity', 'organisation', perseverance, and persistent struggle. These virtues are real and haven't been stirred by the wave of immoralities (though they reached the point of being 'inevitable' as was the case in France and other countries).

Where were these virtues in the enslaved East so that it could resist such 'development' without waning?

The weakness during the Othman rule and subsequent weakness under the crusades had already destroyed the intrinsic values which the East had derived from Islam during the pinnacle of its achievements. 'The sick man' (i.e. the East) needed other than this 'evil' development. In fact, it needed a development which would restore its lost values and traditions. Such remedial development was the prime concern of Islamic movements which the crusaders strove to eradicate. As for the 'destructive' development orchestrated by Europe, the crusaders rushed in to propagate with the

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

assistance of those enslaved Muslims among the people in the East and trained for this purpose.

Darwinian concepts of mankind intensified man's 'desires', and this is not something new, for the Qur'an already refers to this natural instinct in man:

(Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet: women and sons, heaped-up hoards of gold and silver, horses branded (for blood and excellence), and (wealth of) cattle and well-tilled land. Such are the possessions of this world's life, but in nearness to Allah is the best of the goals (to return to).) (*Al-Imran*:14)

There is nothing new about man's incessant desires, but religions and spiritual values have always been striving to entice man to seek the rewards of the other life by weighting such worldly desire against more eternal and noble values. Note what the Qur'an says in the subsequent verse:

(Say, "Shall I give you glad tidings of things far better than those?" For the righteous are Gardens In nearness to their Lord, with rivers flowing beneath; therein is their eternal home, with companions pure (and holy), and the good pleasure of Allah. And in Allah's sight are (all) His servants.) (*Al-Imran*:15)

Life within the boundaries of religion and the Islamic concept achieves a large portion of 'pure' desire without corrupting the soul with such desire. In its 'development' journey, Europe strayed the boundaries of religion which controlled 'desire' and; as a result, plunged in the abyss of boundless desires.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

It began with sexual desires, which is something natural across civilisations, but then such sexual desire was transformed into other desires which -*with the aid of industry and advance of art in the world of production*, filled in all other aspects of life. Life was full of 'pleasures' which were produced by modern industry: cinema, radio, television, luxury cars and comfortable furniture. Industry 'beautified' life, and presented it in an attractive mouth-watering fashion. There is no harm in all that. The harm; however, lies in the 'values' which govern and guide life. Therefore, what is the purpose of life according to the administrators of this type of production and what is its purpose according to the recipients of this production?

It is not the place here to enter in argument about 'Capitalism' and its exploitative production and goals to ensure a lion-share profit which go into the pockets of capitalists.

The matter, in our view, is more serious. Hadn't Capitalism found a great demand on this type of production, it would have sought profit elsewhere because making a profit, according to Communism, is the sole goal of Capitalism.

The heart of the matter is this *excess* of desires which emerged in Europe under the materialist and animalistic concept of mankind, and the Zionism's endeavour to corrupt any non-Jewish parts of the world so that they could bring them under their absolute control on the day when they would be able to guide them by the animalistic drive they are indulged in.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

Whatever the scenario, such longing for *excess* in desires expanded to the point of becoming one of the 'traits' of modern civilisation. And whatever be the present and future outcome of this *excess* of desires in the life of nations – as was the case in France during the last war, and as is the case now in other countries- the predominant aspect is its influence on the spiritual, religious and moral concepts.

The clash between religion and this *excess* in the pursuit of pleasure does not imply that religion –*Islam in particular*- forbids and condemns pleasure. On the contrary, Allah ﷻ says:

ﷻ Say, who has forbidden man to adorn himself with the good things Allah has provided. ﷻ (*Al-A'raaf*:32)

What Islam condemns is the overindulgence in pleasures. Once man is engrossed in life's splendours, he becomes totally unaware of the Hereafter and its obligations. So, this is the excessive indulgence which Islam condemns. However, Islam has never disapproved of inventions which have facilitated man's life such as the car, airplane, fridge, train and the like, nor has it forbidden the cinema, radio or television. What Islam opposes is the obscenities in some T.V. programs and other indecent programs which tend to present life as a sheer moment of wild sex. In any case, this 'corruption' was transferred from the West to the East, and was given the innocent name of 'development' and civilisation.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

As for the issue of women, it may be said that women's movement in Europe was in tune with the social and economic circumstances therein. However, such movement would have taken another course in Europe had people's belief was different, and a completely different direction in the East, where such circumstances did not exist at all.

There is, of course, a big difference between freeing women from the yokes of ignorance, animalism and slavery, and turning women into a sex object. The story began in Europe when man was unable to support the family financially within an industrial 'developed' society. Women had no choice but to go out to work and accept half of man's salary in return for the same work and the same working hours as men.

What a justice! Only Europe's developed and noble conscience could conceive it! As soon as working women realized that their employment rights were being violated, they protested through strike, rally and publicity. And in order to voice their views and stand up for their rights, they had to participate in legislation. By doing so, women would ensure that laws would be passed to protect their interests, not the interests of those who exploit others, unlike Islam whereby the *Shari'a* laws serve and protect the interest of all Muslims. As a first step, women demanded the right of suffrage, participation in parliament, equal job and education opportunities, not to mention other types of equal opportunities on the way.

In response, man rejected women's demands in the name of religion and traditions, though he had already put religion and traditions aside, but he

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

thought of using the two as a weapon to prevent women from bothering him in the workplace and elsewhere.

It was only 'natural' and logical in such European 'schizophrenic' scenario that women revolted and demanded equal opportunities for all. In other words, it was lawful for man to denounce religion and moral values, but unlawful for women to go out to work because in doing so they would infringe upon religion and moral values.

Women, eventually and gradually, gained their rights, including the right to corruption. In fact, women gained the latter right with the aid and encouragement of man. Man thought that this would be a way to easy sex; all he had to do was to prepare the conditions. The result was women's presence everywhere: the shop, supermarket, bank, factory, and the street. They went out both to work and unconsciously to 'tempt'

Against the background of Freud's sexual principles, *excessive* indulgence in fantasy, and the secret Zionist endeavour to corrupt people through fantasies, the woman acquired the expertise of 'seduction'. Still, such expertise did not need any education or training, for women can intrinsically stimulate admiration and get it by any means. However, the means vary from one society to another. Admiration is different from temptation. The former is permissible, pure and innocent, but the latter is impermissible and impure. The European 'civilized' tide, of course, would not opt for the pure means whilst Freud's doctrine told him otherwise; there is no purity in man's nature. Purity is the repressed drives which destroy man's existence..

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

So, women must go to the field with their dirtiest weapon, the weapon of seduction. Seduction should be a goal in itself, though there were no other goals behind it, say getting a husband or even a lover. It was seduction for seduction's sake so that women would feel that they were attractive, and thus had power. And this is exactly what happened; women did have such power.

Since man is an animal in Darwin's theory, controlled by his sex drive, then the supreme authority that rules him is the authority of pleasure. Anything that sexually arouses him is then considered as an authority. On the other side a woman, intrinsically, feel that the more seducer she is, the more powerful she becomes over the man. From this standpoint, seduction, for a woman, turned into a goal in itself, and she did not have to use it to have a husband or a lover. Rather, she would use it as a weapon in her day-to-day relationship with men, and to feel that she was 'present' in the life of this or that man. Now women work hard, but they compensate for such hard work with the 'power' they possess through seduction and the feeling of existence in the hearts of men.

This seduction was not; however, confined to the assertion of existence in the hearts of men. Rather, women became symbols of seduction almost everywhere: cinema, radio, theatre, and so on and so forth. Every place turned into a field of seduction, and the world was plunged into temptation. Hence, this was the 'European development' which Europe exported to humanity in the name of civilisation and progress, and at the same time to destroy -if any- whatever left of religion, family values and traditions.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

It was only normal that such 'development' would find its place in an already conquered, weak and corrupted Islamic world. With the slavish imitation by the East of the movement of 'women's emancipation', coming from Europe and cultivated by imperialism to destroy the edifice of Islamic nation, the art of seduction landed safely in the Islamic world. Muslim women, too, learnt the art of seduction. The cinema, press, radio, theatre, and so on and so forth were all now available in the East and in the local language. Muslim women were able to access literature on women written by female authors who would give them the following how-to recipes of seducing and controlling man:

- How to seduce man at home and outside;
- How to seduce man using body language;
- How to seduce man through dress and make-up.

Seduction for the Muslim woman became more than just a means to have a husband or a lover. It became an end to impose 'existence' so long as she practiced all types of seduction toward any man she would encounter in the workplace or in the street. In fact, the Muslim woman became more superficial and ignorant than her European counterpart because of the melting of the Eastern society during that period. And hence, all the conditions were favourable to destroy whatever left of this religion.

Now, after all these concerted attempts and efforts to destroy this *Aqeeda* by whatever means, would you still expect to see Islam and Muslims on earth? How could that be possible since imperialism used all its might to make life for every Muslim impossible in any part of the world and his existence hell?

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

The hell of persecution, the hell of frustration, and the hell of psychological, intellectual, spiritual and social estrangement they encounter in a non-Muslim society. It is staggering to see or hear that after all that, there are still men on earth who utter the phrase "*Laa Ilaha Illa Allah Muhammad Rasulu Allah*" (There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah). And you would not probably believe it still if I say to you that the future is for Islam.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

The Future Is For Islam

Would anyone believe after all that the future is for Islam? The crusades deployed all its might to split up the Islamic world into small states scattered here and there, reinforcing the concept of 'divide and rule', and separating in each single state life from religion. Furthermore, the crusades challenged every movement designed to restore religion, set up policies that distanced the youth from religion, and produced in every Islamic state a generation of 'intellectuals' which equated Islam with stagnation, backwardness and decline. More to the point, the crusaders made sure to crush any movement which dared defend Islam; otherwise, their efforts of two centuries would go down the drain. In fact, the crusaders succeeded in doing so. They succeeded in estranging the Muslims from their own religion and in foiling any Islamic movement in the Islamic East for generations.

Despite all this, and in the heart of the United States which spent vast sums of dollars on the Christian Mission in the Islamic world evolved the Black Muslim Movement whose black followers reached half a million within three years. In response, the US government began its string of arrests among the black Muslims and use of violence in U.S prisons. But nothing thwarted the spread of the movement. According to the American magazine *Time*, the *Da'wa* (inviting people to Islam), continued inside the prison cells, and

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

nothing would now discourage or undermine the spirit of the followers. Scores of people became true Muslims.

The U.S. had to take the matter seriously now and change its tactics: it *desperately* needed to negotiate a truce with Islam in Africa; otherwise, Communism would move in.

How can man react to this Divine Will which keeps the beacon of *Faith* radiating on earth?

□ Their intention is to extinguish Allah's light (by blowing) with their mouths, but Allah will complete (the Revelation of) His light, even though the unbelievers may detest (it). □ (*As-Saf:8*)

Turning to the West, we may say that the enormous spiritual collapse which it is suffering from will not last forever unless humanity is doomed to perish in this generation. However if humanity is doomed to live on for an indefinite period of time, then it must wake up from its slumber. The good news is that humanity is beginning to wake up. It now realizes that the pangs of hunger (soul and *Aqeeda*) will neither be alleviated with economic, political or social systems, nor with life's splendours. Such pangs of hunger are manifested in myriad forms, to mention but few: psychological disorders, depression, blood pressure, suicide, lunacy, and so on and so forth, despite all the comfort modern industry offers, and despite all the possible entertainment opportunities available. And bear in mind that the more people indulge in

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

pleasures, the more lunatic, depressed, suicidal they become, and the deeper the pangs of hunger get.

There is no doubt that the pangs of hunger will one day be satisfied, but they desperately need the intervention of a strong faith in Allah ﷻ, a faith that is not sheer gestures and utterances, but rather a faith that constitutes man's mind, body and soul. And there is no faith on earth that possesses all these except Islam.

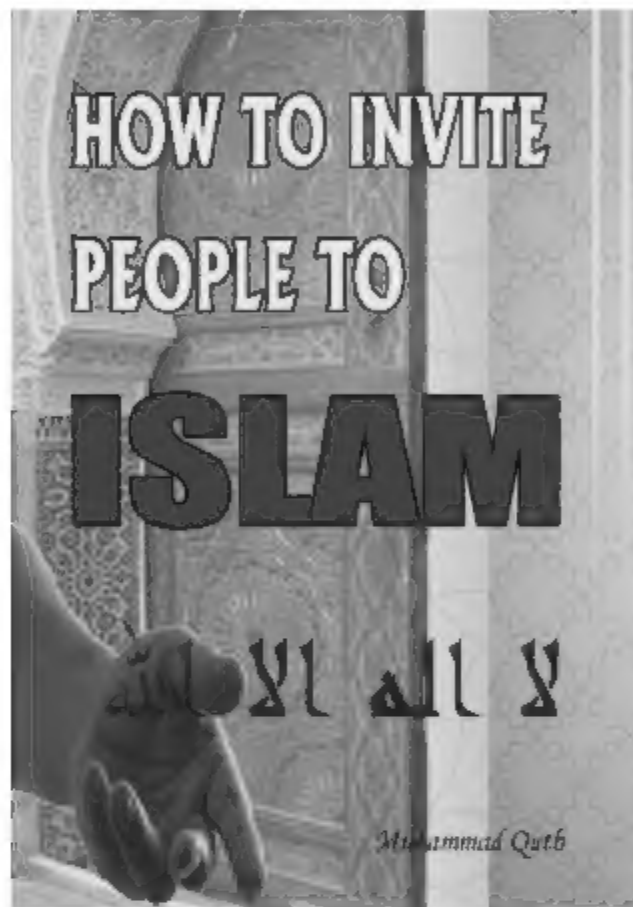
It is not necessary now for people to adopt Muhammad, Ahmad and Ali as names, but they will *-through their fitra and through their long excruciating experience-* come to grips with the reality that this is *the* required faith which comprises man and unifies his direction.

At present, the obstacles which stand in the way of restoring this faith are too enormous to be surmounted, yet they will be eventually go down. Humanity will wake up from its slumber and will acquiescently accept any system based on *Aqeeda*. Joy will give way to seriousness, and man will find its natural comfort in 'acceptable' pleasure. Also the seductive activity in which the American and European woman was involved in to assert her identity was becoming a source of hatred. Soon, the woman will feel that she cannot have control of her seductive activity, and that there is a natural and better 'seduction': admiration.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

On that day, people will return to religion, to Islam, and such return is a force that is more powerful than man's will because it is based on the instinct which Allah ﷻ has placed in the souls. That day is coming and is inevitable; it does not matter when, but the most important is that it is coming.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?



[1] Transmitted by Ahmad and Al-Hakim.

[2] See the issue on *Islamic Criminal Law and Its Appropriateness to Man Throughout History and Its Adoption of Absolute Justice* Part: *Crime and Punishment* in *Al-Insan Bayna al-Maddiyya wa Al-Islam*. Also, consult Part *Idrau al-Hududa bishubuhat* in *Qabasat mina Ar-Rasul*.

[3] See *Shubuhat hawla al-Islam*, Chapter: *Al-Islam wa Al-Mar'a*. This is a detailed study of the relationship between a man and a woman and the nature of this relationship in Islam. It attempts to show how Islam dealt with the issue in complete justice and how 'progress' (positive one) does not add anything to this justice or contradicts it. As for the

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

negative progress which means moral corruption or which calls for equality between man and woman, it has had far-reaching consequences in Europe and is not part of real human values.

[4] According to Communism, these relationships exist only when there is the right of individual property, and once this right is taken away, these laws become void. This is true, but Communism itself has now reinstated individual property.

[5] *Qabasat Mina Ar-Rasul*, Chapter: *Antum A'lamu bi Umuri Dunyakum*.

[6] *Qabasat Mina Ar-Rasul*.

[7] *Islam in Contemporary History*, p.32.

[8] *Musnad al-Bazzār*: 2476

[9] Al-Bukhari (4418), Muslim (2769) and Ahmad (6/387-388).

[10] *Fi Dhilal Al-Qur'an*, Part 28, pp.109-114.

[11] Quoted from *Manhaj Al-Qur'an fi At-Tarbiyya*, Muhammad Shadid.

[12] Quoted from *Manhaj Al-Qur'an fi At-Tarbiyya*, Muhammad Shadid.

[13] An-Nasai in *Fadail as-Sahaba* (196) and *al-Kubra* (5/80-81), classified as sound hadith by al-Arnaut in *Siyar*.

[14] *Fi Dhilali al-Qur'an*, Part: 21, pp.137-150.

[15] *Fi Dhilal Al-Qur'an*, Part:21, pp. 6-8.

[16] Quotes from the Missionaries themselves about this attempt.

[17] Look how this behavior is acceptable in our current society.

[18] (b.1849, d. July 11, 1905) was an Egyptian jurist, religious scholar and liberal reformer, regarded as the founder of Islamic Modernism.

ARE WE MUSLIMS?

[19] The underlined words, phrases or texts are used by the author of the source text to draw the reader's attention to an important issue.

[20] Translation into Arabic by Hasan Ibrahim Hasan, p.48.

[21] Above source, p.51.

[22] For more details, see *Ma'arakat at-Taqaalid*, especially Chapter: *Hina Nakunu Muslimin* (*When We Are Muslims*).

[23] See *Ma'rakat at-Taqaalid*, Chapters: *Jawla ma'a At-Tarikh* and *Haqaiq wa Abatil*.

www.kalamullah.com

Books

[Home](#)[Quran](#)[Books](#)[Lectures](#)[Videos](#)[Contact](#)

Articles

- + Aqeedah
- + Qur'an
- + Hadith
- + Non Muslims
- + New Muslims
- + Worship
- + Innovations
- + Fataawaa
- + Manhaj
- + Learning Arabic
- + Knowledge
- + For Brothers
- + For Sisters
- + For The Youth
- + Heart & Soul
- + Family & Society
- + Personality
- + Current Affairs
- + Groups & Sects
- + Miscellaneous

Books

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

[\[A+\]](#) [\[A-\]](#)

In the Name of Allāh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

[Ibn Qayyim](#) | [Ibn Taymiyyah](#) | [Ibn Kathir](#) | [Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali](#) |
[Muhammad Al-Jibaly](#) | [Salih Al-Munajjid](#) | [Muhammad Al-Maqdisi](#) |
[Ibn Uthaymeen](#) | [Ibn Abd Al-Wahhab](#) | [Bilal Phillips](#) | [Sayyid Qutb](#) |
[Ibn Jawzi](#) | [Umar al-Ashqar](#) | [Abdullah Azzam](#) | [Mitwalli Al-Sharawi](#) |
[Aalidh al-Qarni](#) | [Husayn al-Awaayishah](#) | [Ali As-Sallabi](#) | [Classical](#)

Islamic Creed Series